

# The Baptist Record

JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION

Thursday, January 7, 1993

Published Since 1877

## BWA team declares Cuba wide open to the gospel

WASHINGTON, (BP) — While life seems harder in Cuba, and the political situation more tense, "openness to the gospel seems even more apparent now than 12 months ago," according to Tony Cupit, director of evangelism for the Baptist World Alliance.

Cupit led a seven-member BWA evangelistic team of British and American Baptist pastors and denominational leaders to Cuba, Dec. 1-6, that visited not only churches, but hospitals, factories, house churches, and government officials.

"We also engaged in extensive pastoral visitation with Cuban pastors," said Cupit, who also led a BWA evangelistic team to Cuba in the fall of 1991.

But before the most recent visit could start, political tensions between Cuba and the United States took a toll on the team — only seven of 14 requested visas were granted.

The seven visas granted were those requested by the Baptist Convention of Eastern Cuba. The Baptist Convention of Western Cuba was denied all requested visas.

"The leaders are suddenly feeling vulnerable," Cupit said. "We are alone," some of the western convention leaders told him.

"While failure to secure all the visas was disappointing, the group that went was outstanding," Cupit said, "and we saw such an openness to the gospel," evidenced by some 400 first-time decisions for Christ as a result of the team's preaching.

It was also seen in how the Cubans refused to let blackouts and transportation problems (horse and cart, tractors, and fuel shortages for those with cars) keep them from the evangelistic meetings.

"It was unusual to have a service or a meeting without a response to the gospel," Cupit said. "Generally the responses were immediate; there was no need to prolong the appeal."

"The most exciting time for an evangelism impact in Cuba is now," said team member Isaac Torres, Hispanic consultant for the Baptist General Convention of Texas.

"What we have heard and what we have seen is 'you have been sent from God,'" even from some Community Party members, Torres said.

"Not knowing, I witnessed to a man who was the head man of the

party in the Granma province where I preached," Torres recounted.

"I was invited to eat at his home. He and his wife are medical doctors and his wife, a leader in the party, gave evidence that the Holy Spirit is at work in their lives.

"The man gave me his personal card and said, 'I am sorry but we are not allowed to go to any church,' but I was invited to speak at the medical center, at the human resources office where all the employees were asked by the supervisor to be present

during the preaching.

"When an invitation was given to give public evidence of their faith in Jesus Christ by raising their hands, 10 made it public in that particular place."

"A university professor brought

follow up his decision to receive Christ."

Cupit said he will never forget "the sight of Pablo Calzoncito, director of personal evangelism strategies in the American Baptist Churches in the U.S.A., and Torres

evangelism at Southwestern Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas.

"As soon as the invitation was given, one by one, in quick succession, they raised their hands and then made their way to the front to make a public profession of faith. The delight reflected in their faces when they received a Bible was something to behold."

Sanchez spent much of his time teaching a course on evangelism and church growth at the Baptist Seminary in Santiago de Cuba.

Because of the refusal of the Cuban government to allow seminary faculty to train abroad and the extreme difficulty in securing good texts in Spanish, the seminary struggles to maintain a good teaching standard.

"The students were so eager to learn that every free moment was spent answering their questions and hearing their marvelous testimonies of conversion," Sanchez said.

"Even though transportation is very difficult, these students look forward to the weekend where they can put into practice what they have learned. They spread out throughout the region to participate in church starting and church development activities," Sanchez noted.

The team preached in Eastern Cuba, Bayamo, Las Tunas, Jiguaní, Masinilla, Guantanamo, and Santiago de Cuba.

one of his students to church one evening," Torres said. "Prior to the service, the professor made an appointment so I could speak with his student. The student made a profession of faith that night and had many questions on how to

kneeling on the footpath of the Hilton Hotel praying with two guys who had tried to sell them drugs. "The two guys were apparently genuine, deeply moved, and appreciative of being witnessed to."

"Seeing an entire family come to Christ, including aunts and uncles was a highlight," said Daniel Sanchez, professor of missions and



## Calendar distribution brings Christ to Cuba

HAVANA, Cuba (EP) — During a week-long visit to Cuba in late November, Bible Literature International and Worldteam Canada delivered copies of 1993 Scripture calendars to many officials and church leaders in Havana and the central province of Santa Clara.

The project had received prior approval by Cuba's Ministry of Religion, headed by Jose Cármeado, a respected member of Fidel Castro's presidential cabinet. Printed in Canada, the colorful calendars contain scripture references for each month and a pull-out section on building Christian families.

The two organizations collaborated to produce 100,000 calendars. They will be sold in Cuba, with proceeds used to help the multiplying house churches.

"The calendars are being very well received by a broad segment of the people," commented Jeff McLinden of Bible Literature International. "It's a unique way to place the gospel message in offices, businesses, and homes all across Cuba. Cármeado was very pleased with the quality of the piece and deeply appreciated the content on the family."

In fact, said McLinden, the official requested 50 copies for his personal friends and associates.

Worldteam, which was founded in Cuba 64 years ago, initiated the calendar project in 1991, delivering a small run of 18,000 calendars under the sponsorship of Los Pinos Nuevos ("The Young Pines"), an evangelistic association of churches with a seminary in centrally-located Villa Clara.

"We could have used thousands more," noted Norberto Quesada, president of the Los Pinos churches. The calendars were sold for two pesos each (about \$1.50) and the money was used to help several new house churches. The house churches are serving communities which previously had no church.

"The growth of the church in Cuba, especially the evangelical church, is truly phenomenal," said Albert Ehmann, Worldteam's executive director. "Many young people, even some with professional careers, desire training in Christian service. Our interest is in helping the people of Cuba grow in their faith during these unprecedented times of spiritual openness."

"That's where the calendars fit in," added McLinden. "Here is a

unique, attractive way to package a positive Christian message. People can't get materials like this in Cuba. They're simply not available."

General literature distribution is still not legal within the country.

The calendar project is the first partnership between Worldteam and Bible Literature International. The two organizations have discussed the possibility of future ministry collaborations in Cuba, including the possibility of printing Christian materials on government presses in Havana.

"These are many possibilities," noted Ehmann, "if people are willing to work through proper channels. We're blessed right now to have some unique open doors, and we're trying to do all that we can to help."

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# EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

Guy Henderson

## The age of confusion

"If the trumpet makes an uncertain sound who shall prepare for battle." Welcome, fellow Southern Baptists, to the season of uncertain sounds. The wintry blasts are coming from many areas including Atlanta, Nashville, Richmond, and Dallas.

The SBC leadership is sounding a note of victory. All committees, agencies, and boards are now firmly under the control of the fundamental/conservative group. The course correction has been made, and supposedly the ship continues. Down in Atlanta Cecil Sherman, moderator of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship (CBF), rejoices that the number of CBF-supporting churches nearly doubled in one year, from 391 to 731. Pat Ayers, CBF president, declares she has found "great joy in the freedom and fellowship we are sharing."

Switch now to Nashville and hear SBC Executive Director Morris Chapman say CBF, be gone. Of course, he couched it in theological tones: "If the CBF has any integrity they will get out of the SBC." Former SBC president Jimmy Allen says, "We in CBF are committed to remaining within the Southern Baptist framework."

Meanwhile, in Houston, SBC President Ed Young pauses from his 19 committees long enough to

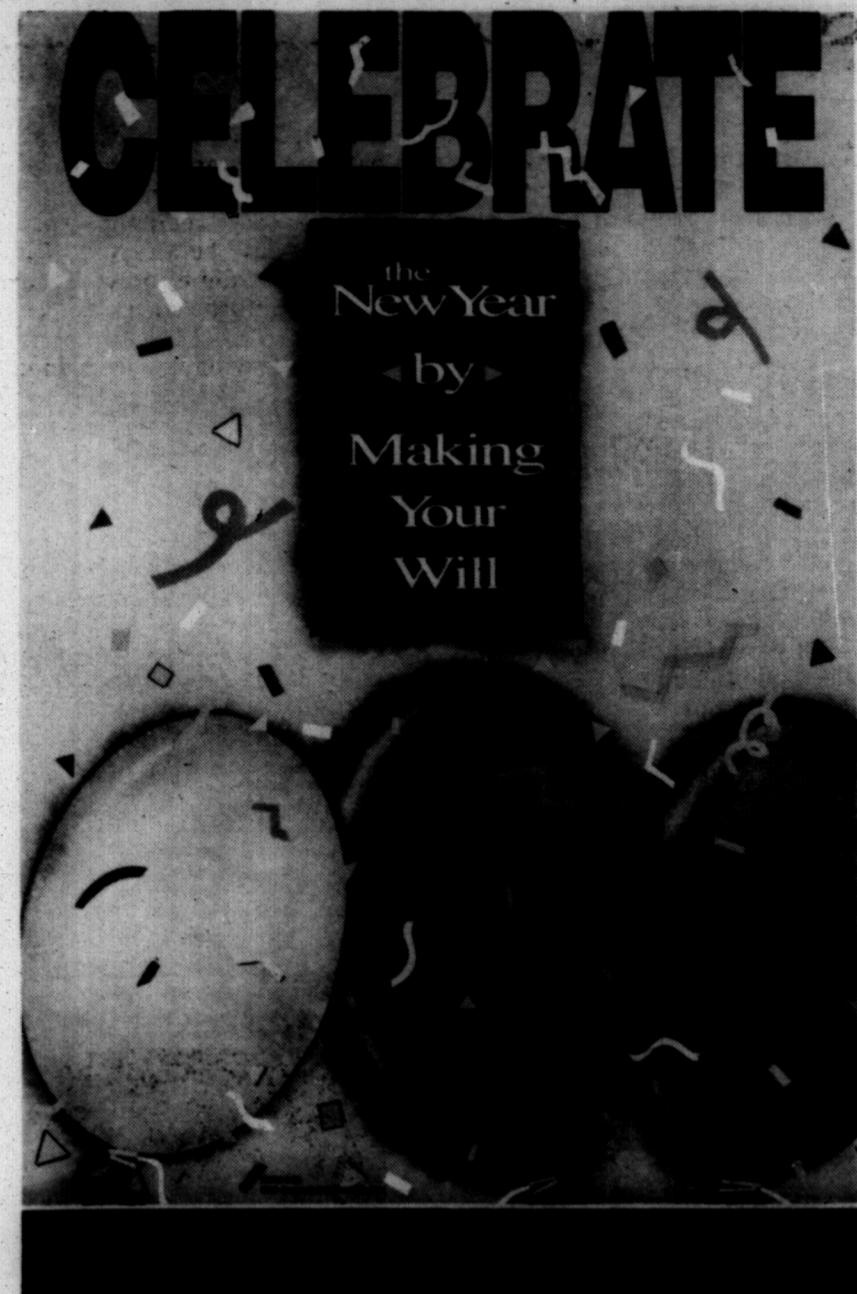
say all are welcome, including independent churches, the Jerry Falwells, CBF, or whoever. The idea being that any ship willing to sail under our flag is welcomed; however, it may translate into "please leave" and "you are welcome." Thus we have the SBC, the non-aligned, and the CBF, all determined to remain in the same house.

Like popcorn on a hot stove we hear more and more noise, hoping it will be palatable. **Baptists Today**, a pro-moderate newspaper, announces it will be the medium for CBF to communicate to its people. The Associated Baptist Press, described as "an independent national news service," accepts a \$40,000 subsidy from CBF which could well erase any independence.

Wait, the corn is still popping! The SBC Executive Committee may be planning a national news magazine using the Baptist Program as the launching platform. Associated Baptist Press laments its lack of contact with grassroots Baptists, surmising a monthly newsletter may be the answer. Publicity directors are working overtime turning out news on seminaries, agencies, and commissions. This plethora of news crosses the desk of 40 or so editors as dozens of trumpets sound daily.

We know what the SBC stands for, even though few can be pleased all the time with its method of conducting business. The CBF, strongly influenced by the eastern seaboard, is championing the cause of things not yet proven. Consider Smyth and Helwys publishing Sunday School literature, the Alliance of Baptists (though relations with CBF are currently strained), the Baptist Seminary at Richmond, Baptist Peace Fellowship of North America, and of all things, Baptist "houses of study" at Emory and Duke universities. Caution must be considered, for you or your church could be buying into more than that for which you bargained.

Since 1947, I've been a minister in the SBC. As long as possible, I intend to remain in it and do my best to support the mainstream of Southern Baptists. When SBC leadership blows a strange sound on the trumpet, it should be reported. CBF remains a part of the SBC; their activities, the good and the irregular, should be made known. The U.S.A., the world, and Southern Baptists are changing. Whatever these changes are, let's conduct ourselves with spiritual discernment and hopefully history will record at least a shred of integrity. Walk carefully, the age of confusion is upon us.



## Make Your Will Month

Making your will or reviewing your will should be one of your prime priorities for 1993. Wills in existence over three years should be reviewed.

Consider some of the values of a valid will. First of all, a will is an extension of your life's goals. You can extend your influence and life interests into eternity through your will.

Your will insures that the assets you have accumulated in life will be distributed as you wish. Assets acquired through hard work and careful planning should be distributed and used as you will them to be used.

When should you make your will? When you become an adult, accumulate assets, when you marry, and when you have children or other dependents.

Does your spouse need a will? Even though your spouse has no separate property, it is advisable for both husband and wife to have separate wills. Each will should have a contingency clause.

What about "Joint Ownership" instead of a will? In the words of a noted estate attorney, "To rely upon joint ownership instead of a will is hazardous."

Do you need a lawyer to prepare your will? Yes! Every will should

be tailor-made to fit the individual. The proper number and qualifications of witnesses and the formality required in the execution of your will are matters best supervised by a qualified lawyer.

What are some additional reasons for having a valid will?

- You can select your executor.
- You can name the person or persons to serve as guardians of your children.
- You can create trusts that will conserve your estate and save taxes.
- You can make special bequests to persons or institutions.
- You can make memorial gifts to a worthy cause to honor a loved one or friend.
- You can tithe your estate to an institution or charitable cause.
- You can distribute your assets proportionately to family and friends.

What if you die intestate (leaving no will)? Your property passes according to your state law. Under the laws of intestacy, your close relatives will share in your estate, but most often, not in the way you would have wanted.

Contact E. Harold Fisher Jr., executive secretary of the Mississippi Baptist Foundation, for further assistance in preparing to make your will.

### Guest opinion...

## Confessions of a former holy man

By Jack R. Smith

Just four months after being called to preach, I became pastor of my first church. I immediately faced a dilemma. Exactly what are pastors supposed to do? I knew there were expectations from God, the church people, my wife (who was expecting), and our two-year-old son. I also had my own expectations. There was not enough time to do everything. Some priorities had to be set.

I chose to follow the expectations of the congregation and myself. As a result, I became a sincere, highly motivated, frustrated, stressed out, sometimes physically sick pastor. However, the congregation thought I was doing great.

I had become a "super-hired holy man," and they seemed proud of me. My family was second, and sometimes even third. I remember feeling guilty if church members saw me taking my family on a picnic, or even mowing the grass, since the time

could be used doing "church work."

One of the worst mistakes was

leading lost people to Christ. Then someone explained Ephesians 4:11-12: "And he (God) gave some, ...pastors... For the perfecting [equipping] of the saints, for the work of the ministry."

...Me, an equipper? I didn't know how to do that. It seemed easier to just do it all myself and let them support me.

God gave me the courage to change my expectations to match His. I never did stop enjoying leading lost people to Christ, but my greatest joy became training other people and seeing them out witness for Jesus. The people became busy as ministers, and I became their player/coach. The church, consequently, had more peace and harmony, and many more excited new believers. God's way always works!

Smith works in the Evangelism Department of the Home Mission Board.

**Soul-Winning Commitment Day**

**Share the Gospel: Equip Believers**

Ephesians 4:11-12

**Soul-Winning Commitment Day**  
January 10, 1993

**One-Day Soul-Winning Workshop**  
January 16, 1993

accepting the role of "the church's soul-winner." I was robbing the members of the greatest joy that Christians can know: the joy of

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# Southern trustees consider heresy hearings on Simmons

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (ABP) — Baptist seminary professor Paul Simmons, whose pro-choice position on abortion has angered many trustees of Southern Seminary, likely will face formal dismissal charges as early as February, according to some trustees.

A last-ditch effort to quietly resolve the Simmons dispute failed Dec. 15 when trustees voted down a plan to buy out his contract at a cost of up to \$362,000.

Now the seminary faces the probability of hosting heresy hearings against Simmons, who has taught Christian ethics at the school since 1969.

All parties agree there are few other options left.

Unless Simmons resigns, which he has shown no inclination to do, or the trustees drop their dispute with the professor entirely, which for many would be an intolerable admission of failure, only formal dismissal hearings can resolve the matter.

"I don't know of any other thing that could," said trustee chairman Wayne Allen, a Tennessee pastor.

"I think there will be some closure by April," predicted trustee Jerry Johnson, a key figure in the dispute.

Simmons, 56, has been a target of conservative trustees because of his support of abortion rights and his views on homosexuality. However, as a full professor with tenure, he

can be fired only for violating his contract or teaching contrary to the seminary's doctrinal statement.

Seminary sources say either charge would be hard to prove. However, trustees have been scouring Simmons' record and writings for more than a year in search of grounds for dismissal.

"My impression is there will be (hearings)," said Johnson, a member of the academic personnel committee and chairman of the committee's work group investigating Simmons. "I think everybody is ready for us to do something or shut up," he said. Johnson is a pastor from Aurora, Colo., and one of Simmons' chief critics.

Even Simmons has acknowl-

edged hearings appear inevitable. After an earlier buyout proposal was dropped, Simmons said he was ready to "move on" with the hearings.

Almost two thirds of the trustees voted against buying out Simmons' contract during the closed-door meeting Dec. 15. Most fundamental-conservatives, who hold a majority on the board, opposed the buyout as an inappropriate use of funds and an improper solution to the problem. It failed 21-34.

Trustee leaders, though conservative, are viewed as more pragmatic than many on the board. Those leaders, who called the special Dec. 15 meeting apparently because they expected the Simmons' buyout to

pass, "miscalculated" support for the proposal, said trustee David Miller of Heber Springs, Ark.

That miscalculation was evident when the buyout plan was presented to trustees and met by "utter silence," reported another trustee. Although the proposal came from the academic affairs committee, none of the committee members except the chairman spoke in favor of the plan, the trustee reported, and Johnson spoke against it.

The vote on Simmons, by demonstrating the power of fundamental-conservatives, could guarantee that a hard-line conservative is chosen to succeed President Roy Honeycutt, trustee sources said. The board hopes to elect his successor in April.



## Youth Conference draws record crowd

The 1992 Youth Evangelism Conference set a record with 3,468 in attendance. Meeting Dec. 28 and 29 at the A.E. Wood Coliseum on the Mississippi College campus, the conference featured Louie Giglio speaking straight to youths of today. Giglio, mixing video talk with the gospel, gave a clear explanation of how to accept Christ and walk with Him.

Dennis Lee, musician and ventriloquist, entertained the high-school-age congregation as he spoke of Christ, able and willing to lead in every situation. Lou Leventhal of Student Discipleship Ministries, and Sam Perry and Choice Worship Team also held the attention of the students and challenged them to live for Christ.

New features of the Youth Evangelism Conference were three "Believit Groups" who met in seminars to discuss current topics considered vital to teenagers.

James P. Fancher, consultant, MBCB Evangelism Department, and Rick Malone of Parkway Church, Jackson, were in charge of the meeting. They were assisted in registration and sound by Tim Lott of Pearl; in hospitality by Cindy Townsend of First Church, Jackson, in counselor preparation by John Gibson of First, Greenwood; and by Bill Bustin of Tupelo and Tom Daniels of Starkville, who served as seminar coordinators.

Ten professions of faith and "several hundred" rededications were reported.



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## Evangelism conference opens with address by SBC's Young

The president of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) will be on hand to open the 1993 Mississippi Baptist Evangelism Conference, scheduled for Jan. 25-26 at West Jackson Street Church in Tupelo, according to J. Garland McKee, evangelism director at the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.

McKee described the conference as "two days of feasting fare in evangelism."

SBC President and Laurel native Ed Young, a graduate of Mississippi College and current pastor at Second Church in Houston, Texas, will speak at 1:30 p.m. on Monday, Jan. 25.

The conference will also include brothers Bo and Dick Baker. Bo Baker is an international evangelist, while Dick Baker is a worldwide music minister and gospel music composer. Dick Baker will be in charge of music for the conference.

William Augustus Jones Jr., pastor of Bethany Baptist Church in Brooklyn, New York, for 30 years, will add a heralded dimension to the conference. Jones, the son and grandson of Baptist ministers, has preached on every continent and is in great demand throughout the world.

Others preaching at the confer-

ence will be Tim Lee, a Vietnam veteran who lost both legs while serving in the U.S. Marines during the war; Paul Powell, president of the SBC Annuity Board; Bailey Stone, evangelism director for the Baptist General Convention of Texas; P.J. Scott, pastor of First Church in Olive Branch; Danny Lanier, evangelist and resident of Little Rock, Miss.; Jack Smith, associate director of the personal evangelism department at the SCB Home Mission Board in Atlanta; and Bill Duncan, executive director of the Alaska Baptist Convention in Anchorage.

Bernard Johnson, acclaimed as the "World's Greatest Gospel Saxophonist," will provide one of the musical mountain peaks of the conference.

Bill Hanson, a Dallas dentist and organist at Prestonwood Church in Dallas, will be the organist for the conference. Hanson has served

numerous times as organist at the annual meetings of the Southern Baptist Convention.

June Richardson McKee of Clinton, a music graduate of Mississippi College, will be the pianist for the conference. She has served as church pianist for 36 years.

"Every pastor and staff member will want to avail himself and herself of this evangelism conference. It is my prayer that pastors will encourage lay people to be in attendance," McKee said.

"The conference will definitely be a part in 'Helping to Bring Mississippi and the World to Jesus,'" he added.

Persons interested in more information on conference registration, agenda, and accommodations in Tupelo may contact the Evangelism Department, Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, at P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Telephone: (601) 968-3800.



Young

Lanier

Johnson

Powell



B. Baker

D. Baker

Jones

Lee

Stone

Scott

# NOBTS awards degrees to number of Mississippians

Six Mississippians received their doctoral degrees from New Orleans Seminary during commencement exercises on Dec. 18. They include: Lee Hinson, San Antonio, Texas, minister of music and youth at Pelahatchie Church, Pelahatchie, doctor of musical arts; Will Hayes McRaney Jr., Natchez, pastor of Daybreak Community Church, SBC, Littleton, Colo., doctor of philosophy; J. Steven Mooneyham, Calhoun City, pastor of Coteau Church, Houma, La., doctor of ministry; Harold R. Mosley, Cleveland, supplementary teaching staff at New Orleans Seminary, doctor of philosophy; C. Perry Sanderford, Brandon, director and staff counselor, Crossroads Counseling Center, doctor of education; Murray Ross Wilton, Port Elizabeth, South Africa, son of John and Rhodabelle Wilton of Long Beach, interim pastor of Southside Church, Huntsville, Ala.

#### Masters' degrees

Receiving their masters' degrees were E.L. Mullen, Benoit, master of divinity; Garritt P. Starnes III, Jackson, pas-

tor of Pine Burr Church, Columbia, master of divinity; Raymond Kyle Jones, Lumberton, pastor of East Pearl Church, Poplarville, master of divinity; Charles H. Jones, Drew, pastor of Linn Church, Doddsville, and director of Parchman prison ministry for the MBCB, master of divinity; Shea Dungan Williams, Natchez, master of divinity; Deborah Gibson, Meridian, master of arts in Christian education; Edwin Allen Boland Jr., Calhoun City, chaplain of apartment ministries, Suburban Church, New Orleans, master of divinity degree with a major in Christian education; Michael Ray Priest, Ripley, pastor of Ford's Creek Church, Poplarville, master of divinity degree with languages; Michael L. Soesbe, Foley, Ala., pastor of Emmanuel Church, Nicholson, master of divinity; Alan Permenter, West Point, interim pastor, Valence Street Church, New Orleans, master of divinity.

#### Associate degrees

Jerry Guess, Ackerman, pastor of Bethsaida Church, Philadelphia, received his associate degree.



**Students with Mississippi ties received doctoral degrees from New Orleans Seminary during commencement exercises on Dec. 18. Seminary President Landrum P. Leavell II (fourth from left) congratulated**

**those receiving doctoral degrees, including (from left) G. Lee Hinson, Will Hayes McRaney Jr., Steven Mooneyham, Harold Mosley, C. Perry Sanderford, and Murray R. Wilton. (Photo supplied by NOBTS)**

## Models in Ministry Conference pushes church communication

Twelve Mississippians joined about 50 others at Central Church in North Little Rock, Ark., for the Models of Ministry Conference, in coordination with the Cooperative

Missions Department, Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.

Lyle E. Schaller, church consultant on staff at Yokefellow Institute and author of three dozen

books, including **The Change Agent, Effective Church Planning, Getting Things Done, and Activating the Passive Church**, stated that asking questions is the key to being a change agent in the local church. Asking questions is the beginning of oral communication to get church members to put their agenda on the table.

Attendees at left included (front row, from left) Eddie Jones, Greenville; Lyle E. Schaller, Milwaukee, Wisc.; Cleophus Rawls, Batesville; Lennon Brown, Greenville; (second row, from left) Bobby Douglas, Columbus; Richard Brogan, Jackson; J. C. Prather, Tupelo; (third row, from left) J. C. Renfroe, director of missions, Rankin Association; Louis Lamar, Tupelo; Edward Nix, Columbus. (fourth row, from left) Joey Shorter, Columbus; Bill Smith, Tupelo; Harold Bryson, New Orleans; Neron Smith, Jackson; and Bobby Waggoner, Flowood.

Jackson will be the site of the December 1993 conference.



## Gallup poll finds 7 of 10 teens "religious"

PRINCETON, N.J. (ABP) — Most American teenagers consider themselves "religious," according to new research by the Gallup Organization.

About seven in 10 teens surveyed said they agree with the statement that they are religious, including 19% who agree very strongly.

And many teens who don't attend worship regularly still con-

sider themselves religious.

Among the 30% who said they are not religious, only 5% held this position strongly. This statistic coincides with previous Gallup surveys which have shown only about 5% of Americans consider themselves atheists or agnostics.

Younger teens are most likely to consider themselves religious, the new poll found. However, a dip in identification with religion occurs

around ages 14 to 15, presumably during a period of teenage rebellion.

Teenagers who live in rural areas are more likely than those who live in urban areas to consider themselves religious. For example, only 15% of urban teens strongly agreed that they are religious, compared to about 25% of rural teens.

The poll was conducted last summer.

Two Mississippians and a former Mississippian were named to the executive committee of the National Council on Bivocational Ministries during the council's annual December meeting in Fort Worth, Texas.

The executive committee is made up of those persons who serve in positions related to bivocational ministers in the various states plus a few others.

Pictured in the photo above are (front row, left to right) Billy Kite of Crossett, Ark.; Domingo Ozuna of De Soto, Texas; Dale Holloway, national missionary for bivocational ministries, Florence; Larry Kirk, Brentwood, Tenn.; and Debbie Harrell, Toledo, Ore.; (back row, left to right) Mike Dennis, Jefferson City, Mo.; Vernon Ponder, Taylors, S.C.; Bob Ray, Burleson, Texas; Matt Buckles, bivocational coordinator for the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, Jackson; Charles Stewart, Ashland, Ky., president

of Kentucky Baptist Convention and president of the council; Steve Bumgardner, Jacksonville, Fla.; Carl Elder, Fort Worth, Texas; Corbin Cooper, Cary, N.C.; and Paul Stevens, director of field education at Southwestern Seminary, Fort Worth, and former pastor of Ridgecrest Church, Jackson.

**Jimmy McCaleb** (below) bivocational minister of music at Day Star Church, near Florence, was the song leader for the annual meetings of the National Council on Bivocational Ministries and the Southern Baptist Bivocational Ministers Association. The companion meetings were held back-to-back at Gambrill Street Church in Fort Worth.



## State ministers to serve on executive committee of national "bivo" council

## On the waterfront

# Baptist pastor reaches out to casino employees

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When Harrison County voters said yes to dockside gambling March 10, John Landrum was disappointed.

As pastor of Popp's Ferry Baptist Church in Biloxi, Landrum had taken a strong "no dice" stand that many others in Coast pulpits had. As the reality of their defeat settled in, many of these pastors simply shifted their focus to other activities.

Landrum tried to shake it off, but he couldn't fight the tug of God. Hundreds of casino employees would soon make the Coast their new home.

But who would reach out to them? Landrum tried to think about what might be running through their minds:

"I'm a casino employee, and I need to go to a church for help. Where do I go? I can't go to a church that preaches against gambling. Where can I find someone who will love me without conditions?"

Landrum wants to be that man. So he resigned his position at Popp's Ferry, returned to Pass Road Baptist Church as a member and printed a business card that reads "Rev. John Landrum—Chaplain to the Mississippi Beach."

With the support of his wife, Linda, also a chaplain, Landrum called the management of the three Biloxi casinos and offered his services.

"They are some of the nicest people you'd want to meet," Landrum said.

He stresses that he does not want

anything from casino managers. He simply wants to serve them in a counseling capacity, if they notice any spiritual or emotional needs among their employees, particularly needs that can be met through one-on-one counseling.

"You're going to see a work among these people, because God said to do it," Landrum said Sunday night, when he detailed his vision to Pass Road Baptist Church.

Pass Road pastor Edgar Jackson thinks Landrum's idea is one whose time has come.

"I thank God that there's somebody that's going to take this ministry to these people," Jackson said. "I wholeheartedly support him."

Keith Rogers, whose Families for Quality Life organization spearheaded the fight against dockside gambling, agrees with Jackson.

"There's a lot of people who have moved into our area who are now potential prospects for the churches—people who have needs," Rogers said. "We fully expect that as time goes on, as people get caught up in (gambling) more and more, there will be a lot of suffering."

Landrum has studied the target of his ministry well enough to recite some numbers.

The three Biloxi casinos—the President, the Biloxi Belle and the Isle of Capri—employ 2,400. Seventy-five percent of those are local people. That leaves 600 people who are new to the Coast.

The Wednesday opening of Casino Magic, the first casino in Hancock County, means more new people on the Coast. Landrum wants to offer his services to those employees as well.

By Allen Palmeri

If 10 casinos, with 800 employees apiece, take hold on the Coast, that means 8,000 employees. Two thousand of those will be new residents—people who might not know where to find spiritual shelter if a hurricane of problems hits them.

Both Cathey Riemann, public relations manager for the President, and Rich Westfall, director of marketing for the Isle of Capri, expressed support for the concept that Landrum is promoting.

"We like to see our employees become active members of the community," Riemann said. "That would certainly include finding a church. We're very happy that he's providing this service to them."

"It's something that is one of those personal decisions that a person makes," Westfall said. "If someone can help our employees and direct them in the best way, in a need they might have, certainly we would listen to them and talk to him and make the best direction available in our area."

"Someone new in town doesn't always know the best direction to turn. You can always look in a phone book. But anytime you can talk to someone who knows the area, we're always open to that information."

On Sunday night at Pass Road Baptist, Landrum challenged his audience to think in terms of escaping the four walls of a church. Outside of those walls are things that church people often have problems thinking about—such as casinos.

"If we're going to reach people in America today, we're going to have to go where they are," Landrum said. "Folks, if Jesus has

saved you, you need to learn how to be a fisherman, and then do it."

Landrum has only a few things on his wish list: a stable monthly budget and an office near the midpoint of the Coast.

His vehicle is Landrum Evangelistic Association, a non-profit organization he and Linda operate out of their home in Gulfport. A board of directors is planned.

But the main plan driving Landrum these days is the plan found in Jeremiah 29:11-13. It is the plan that God has laid on his heart, he says.

"For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans to prosper you and not to harm you,

plans to give you hope and a future. Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart."

Said Landrum: "That has become real in my life."

*Editor's Note: Since this article first appeared on Oct. 3, 1992, several more gambling operations have opened along the Coast, prompting Landrum to expand his ministry to employees and guests of other tourist-related industries in the area. Landrum can be contacted at 44 Fleetwood Drive, Gulfport, MS 39503. Telephone: (601) 831-1230.*



John Landrum (right) and his wife, Linda, have started a new ministry to address the spiritual and emotional needs of people involved in legalized gambling and tourist-related businesses along the Mississippi Gulf Coast. Landrum, who tags himself as "chaplain to the Mississippi Beach", resigned his pastorate at Popp's Ferry Church in Biloxi in order to devote full-time effort to the project.

## AIDS sufferer strives to use illness as catalyst to seek God

OKLAHOMA CITY (BP)—Twice in the last year, Mike Hawkins was at the point of death. Twice God delivered him.

Even with such miraculous healing, though, the prognosis is not good because Hawkins has AIDS.

There are several ways people can catch AIDS—blood transfusions or sharing hypodermic needles or sexual contact with an infected person. Hawkins caught it while living a homosexual lifestyle, a lifestyle he had left behind before he was diagnosed with the disease.

Hawkins said his personal troubles began as a small boy, when "Satan attacked my mind with thoughts that I was 'weird' because I was a boy. I didn't get a good understanding that the differences between boys and girls were natural, normal—the way God designed the universe. Satan used that weak area of my life."

"Most boys go through a time when they think girls are 'yucky.' I internalized that and thought I was 'yucky.'"

Although he emphasized that this was not true in his case, Hawkins said many boys who turn to a homosexual lifestyle do so because there is no strong male figure in their lives. Some are in single-parent homes, some in homes where the father is a workaholic and never around.

"They need their daddies to hug them, to kiss them, to be a godly male influence," he said.

If there is no such influence, when children are developing their sexual identities during ages 8-11, he said that need for love from their fathers becomes eroticized. Some boys deal with it by becoming overly masculine and participating in "manly" sports and activities; others deal with it by having many love relationships with women; still others deal with it by turning to homosexuality.

"I believe that 80% of the males in our society as a whole feel a lack of male compassion and have difficulty in relating with other men," Hawkins said. "We as men all have an emotional side but we

suppress it because it's not 'masculine.'"

Hawkins said children are not born homosexuals but are led astray gradually over many years.

"Nobody wakes up one day and says, 'I want to be a homosexual,'" he said. "They fall into it gradually. Coming out of it is also the same gradual process. I had a lifetime developing ideas about sexuality, whether right or wrong, so it takes time. But we need to leave all sin behind, whether it is lying or coveting or homosexuality."

While he was living a homosexual lifestyle, Hawkins said his parents never stopped praying for him. That eventually led to him disavowing homosexuality.

Hawkins came out of the homosexual lifestyle in January 1987. In 1988 he was diagnosed with AIDS.

"I had a full year of developing my relationship with Christ that allowed me to approach AIDS with a great deal more security, peace and hope," he said. "I think

that God can use this disease of AIDS in many people's lives as a catalyst to get them to seek God. I do not think AIDS is a plague, but God created everything that lives, and I think God has placed it in the world to teach us that anything outside his perfect will provides death."

"If you stay within God's will, for the most part you remain free from those things."

In December 1991, Hawkins came down with histoplasmosis and was given 48 hours to live. He had been living in Arkansas but returned home to Oklahoma City to die.

As his church, family, and friends united in prayer, he recovered. In April, he said he began seeking God's direction in his life.

In cooperation with First Stone Ministries of Oklahoma City, Hawkins developed the Christian AIDS Network (CAN), which provides resources to churches about the disease.

"Our goal is to get churches involved," Hawkins said. "We

don't want to be the only source of involvement—we want other people involved, too."

He said CAN is growing "by leaps and bounds" and he is now speaking in churches across the area. CAN is getting certified as an HIV testing site and a scholarship fund has been established to provide AIDS education in high schools. There is also an AIDS conference scheduled in May and two support groups have been formed—one for people with AIDS and one for families of people with AIDS.

"It is so important for me to get involved, because between 1988-91 our family kept silent about my illness," Hawkins said. "We were so afraid of the rejection we might face. I want to provide an environment that is safe for people to talk about it, and to receive prayer support."

Hawkins said CAN supplies speakers on the subject of dealing with AIDS. CAN can provide speakers, music, licensed preachers. Telephone: (405) 525-FREE.



## Mission money at work

The congregation of Faith Baptist Chapel, Charleston, occupied a mobile chapel in November provided through the Margaret Lackey State Mission Offering. It was placed on property bought with a \$12,000 grant. The mission, sponsored by Tallahatchie Association, now has 28 members and averages 48 in morning worship. Tom Whitsett (above) is pastor.

## Parents share common frustrations communicating with teens

(ZPS) — The majority of parents of adolescents have at least one thing in common: the difficulty they face in communicating with their offspring. As soon as puberty strikes, simple dialogue can become as troublesome as conversing with a brick wall.

Youth expert Jerry Johnston has conducted school assemblies for over 4 million teenagers. He is the author of *Who's Listening?* (Zondervan Publishing House, 1992).

According to Johnston, there are 20 prescriptions for effective com-

munication with teenagers:

1. Start listening today. It's not too late even if you have an older teen and you haven't done a very good job of communicating with each other.

2. Read the signals. Johnston says teens are always sending message signals, either directly or indirectly, such as "the friends they are hanging out with, the books they read, the favorite songs they play repeatedly, the notes they write, the way they dress. Abrupt or drastic changes in any of these areas is a

tip-off that something's wrong."

3. Be discerning and approachable. Don't be a detective or go on a witch-hunt, but look at what your teenager enjoys. If you sense that something is wrong, don't overact. If they start to open up, listen.

4. Let your teen talk whenever and about whatever even if it doesn't fit into your timetable.

5. Show your love, unconditionally. One way to make sure that your teens know that they are loved is to tell them again and again. A tangible expression of

love is time.

6. Be a confidant to your teenager. Every teen is looking for someone to befriend and understand him, someone to whom secrets are given without fear.

7. Don't be a nagger.

8. Emphasize the good that your teenager displays.

9. Model proper respect for authority. America puts more people behind bars than does any nation on earth. Some of these prisoners learned from their parents to question, challenge, and re-ject authority over them.

10. Demand the best but not perfection, focusing more on effort than performance.

11. Be generous with hugs. There's something about physical attention and a teenager that says,

"Mom and Dad really care about me." Deep down inside they long for that kind of physical evidence of your love.

12. Know what to overlook, remembering that your teen is human and can make mistakes. Ask yourself, "What will I gain from pointing out yet another error?" Then opt for mercy.

13. Allow your teenager some privacy. Don't force your teen to talk when she doesn't want to.

Relax, and give your child (and yourself) some breathing room.

14. Take an interest in your teen's friends. You can't choose your teen's friends, but you can notice them. Monitor your teenager's choice of friends.

15. Control your anger. Teens know exactly how to light your fuse!

16. Be your teen's best role model. A teenager will identify more quickly with an imperfect but honest parent than with one who only works at an image of perfection.

17. Be honest with your discipline, making the punishment fit the "crime" and disciplining in love, not anger. You aren't doing a favor for your child if you are afraid to discipline.

18. Seek a few valuable allies. Form an alliance with at least one other adult that

your teen looks up to who has rapport with your teen.

19. Pray with your teen—regularly, explaining that you believe in the power of prayer for your mutual well-being and safety.

20. Plan at least one special event each month involving only you and your teen to explore and renew all the things that you have forgotten that you have in common.

## Growth, renewal are goals of Miss. retreat for Baptist Women, Baptist Young Women

The annual Baptist Women/Baptist Young Women retreat will be held at Camp Garaywa on Feb. 26-27. The re-treat, sponsored by Woman's Missionary Union (WMU) of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board (MBCB), is an inspiring time of growth and renewal led by outstanding laywomen of Mississippi.

Registration will begin at 4 p.m. on Friday, Feb. 26, followed by supper at 6 p.m. and the Friday night program at 7 p.m. Walk-in registrants are welcomed.

The Friday night program features Bible study led by Jewel Merritt of Jackson, with dramatic portrayals of Esther and Priscilla given during both the Friday night

and Saturday morning sessions by Deborah Brunt of Corinth. Bobbie Foster of Prentiss will play the marimba, and special music will be performed by home missionary Gwen Williams of New Orleans.

Pamela Smith of Clinton will lead participants in "relaxation aerobics". Peggy Wallace of Peru and Gwen Williams will be among the featured missionaries participating in the MissionStroll that will conclude the Friday night program.

Special interest conferences will be held on Saturday, Feb. 27, beginning at 8:30 a.m. Conference leaders, and their topics, will be Linda Donnell of Hattiesburg, "Christian Personality Development"; Deborah Brunt,

"Things Fail, People Fall"; and Gail Benedict of Purvis, "Involving People in Missions (Practical Suggestions)". The retreat will conclude at noon on Saturday.

Registration deadline for Camp Garaywa accommodations is Tuesday, Feb. 23. Cost is \$23 per person, payable to Camp Garaywa, P.O. Box 1278, Clinton, MS 39060. Each person should bring her own linens and towels.

Directors of Baptist Women, Baptist Young Women, and WMU groups will receive information packets through the mail. For additional information, contact WMU, MBCB, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205, phone (601) 968-3800.

Donnell

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# Hemphill cautions against unstable growth method

By Frank Wm. White

NASHVILLE (BP)—Church growth is the local church carrying out the Great Commission, and some of the finest practitioners in church growth are Southern Baptists, Ken Hemphill told state Sunday School leaders.

Speaking to state leaders of Baptist Sunday School work during Dec. 9-11 annual planning meetings at the Sunday School Board, Hemphill said the Southern Baptist niche in church growth is largely being ignored even though some of the best examples are in the convention.

Hemphill is director of the Southern Baptist Center for Church Growth, a cooperative effort of the Sunday School Board and the Home Mission Board.

Because of the trend toward innovative approaches to church growth with an avalanche of consultants and books on the subject, Hemphill cautioned state leaders to evaluate church growth ideas with three essential points.

Any church growth plan should be biblical, Baptist, and adaptable to different church situations, he said.

While recent church growth writers have indicated 10 percent of a congregation may have the gift of evangelism, Hemphill pointed out that all Christians have the biblical directive for evangelism.

"If we develop our strategy on

the basis of an observation that only 10% are doing evangelism rather than the revelation that every Christian should be doing evangelism, we will be in trouble," he said.

Baptists have a heritage of growth, and Baptist theology is suited to growth, Hemphill said. "Our theology is best suited for church growth but we desperately need a theological renewal."

"People are looking for a microwavable method of growth. They want to take it home and plug it in and let it work for their church without much effort," he said.

However, growth methods that work in one location may be wrong for another location if the principles can't be adapted to the situation, he cautioned.

Hemphill said the struggle for church growth is developing a gap between the "innovative" or "contemporary" church and the "traditional" church. The terms indicate the traditional church is neither innovative nor contemporary.

"It is likely that the best mix for the great majority of Southern Baptist churches is innovation on a strong biblical and Baptist traditional model," he said. "We must help the traditionalists who are frozen in the past learn from the celebrative and contemporary. We must help the contemporary church to not accept uncritically

everything that comes down the pike in the name of innovation."

He cited 10 concerns and weaknesses of current approaches to church growth.

1) Many plans are "heavy on methods and marketing and light on missions and message," he said.

While marketing the church is important, churches should not neglect the ability of God to change people, Hemphill said.

2) The idea that confrontational evangelism is not working is based on a misunderstanding of personal soul-winning and poor statistical research, he said.

Hemphill pointed out that 14 of the 17 largest churches in the Southern Baptist Convention have weekly visitation and evangelism programs.

3) Marketing information suggesting a low level of commitment from church members may be a self-fulfilling prophecy, he said. "We tell people often enough that we expect a low level of commitment and we get what we expect."

A marketing strategy that down-plays commitment and giving creates a feeling of a "bait-and-switch" strategy when tithing and involvement are mentioned, he said.

4) Target evangelism that focuses on a single age group can only work in large metropolitan

areas and does not supply the diversity which creates unity for the church, Hemphill said.

"If you target one age group, you have to keep your aim moving as the age group grows older," he said.

"Most churches must pick multiple targets," he said. "Age-graded Sunday School offers the multiple-target approach that is needed."

5) Church growth strategies that are weak on discipleship "do not bode well for the future of the church," he said. "If we are going to grow, we must grow future generations of the church."

6) Church planting is not a part of most church growth strategies. "We will not win the world by growing megachurches," he said. "It will take planting many churches in many communities."

7) The suggestion that cells are more effective than traditional Sunday School is not based on research facts, Hemphill said.

Sunday School is reaching 80% of the people who attend worship services, Hemphill said. "If traditional Sunday School is working for 80% of the congregation, why not maintain and strengthen the Sunday School while you develop a network of cells for special needs and interests for those who are not attending Sunday School?"

8) Hemphill said there is no statistical evidence to support claims

that denominational labels are a deterrent to church growth. "Church growth is not a competitive sport but a cooperative ministry," he said. "If this trend is not challenged, it will cause an erosion in our cooperative ministry at every level."

Removing the label is the least significant thing a church could do to grow. "If the product inside the wrapper is tasteless, changing the wrapper makes no substantial difference," he said.

Of the top 150 churches in the Southern Baptist Convention, only two have omitted Baptist from their name, Hemphill said.

9) An emphasis on "front door" or "side door" evangelism could cause a lack of emphasis on "their door" evangelism, he said.

In every generation, a method emerges which seems to promise that we can shirk our responsibility to go to the lost," he said. "We cannot exchange a 'come-and-see' approach for a 'go-and-tell' approach.

10) Efforts to make worship services seeker-targeted tend to dilute authentic worship, he said. "We need to be seeker-sensitive rather than seeker-targeted."

"Look at what you are doing to make the experience comfortable for the seeker but don't compromise the integrity of worship," he cautioned.

White writes for BSSB.

## EDUCATION AND YOUTH MINISTER

- January 11-15 MasterLife Workshop, Ken Mooney, LBC
- February 18-20 Mississippi Baptist Religious Education Association
- February 19-22 DiscipleYouth II, Clyde Hall, BSSB
- February 25-26 Louisiana Baptist Religious Education Association
- March 4 Dealing with Stress in the Ministry, Dr. Tom Roote, NOBTS
- March 8 Doctrine of Salvation; Book Study, Art Crisco, BSSB
- March 11 Plan for Success with VBS!, Dr. Paula Stringer, NOBTS
- April 8 Discipline Principles and Techniques for Parents of Children Ages Birth-12 Years, Dr. Philip Coyle, NOBTS
- April 9-10 Leadership Training: Parenting by Grace, for Spanish-Speaking Persons, Ray Wells, LBC
- April 19 Strategies for Building a Single- Adult Ministry, Dr. Ferris Jordan, NOBTS
- April 23-26 DiscipleYouth I, Clyde Hall, BSSB
- April 30-May 1 DiscipleLife Lab , Clyde Hall, BSSB
- Mar 4 How to Get Started with Church Growth, Dr. Chuck Kelley, NOBTS

## SPECIAL INTEREST

- January 19 Church Hostess, Steve Achord, NOBTS

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For More Information Call or Write:  
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## PASTOR/COUNSELOR

- January 11-15 MasterLife Workshop  
Ken Mooney, LBC
- January 18-20 SBC Church Growth Plan for Small and Large Churches  
D.G. McCoury, BSSB, and Bill May, Arizona Baptist Convention
- January 30 Changes: An Introduction to the Future of Your Church, Dr. Chuck Kelley, NOBTS
- February 1 Conducting a Support Group for Divorced Persons, Dr. Ferris Jordan, NOBTS
- February 6 Improving Your Voice in Sermon Delivery, Dr. Rhonda Kelley and Dr. Luther Dorr, NOBTS
- February 15 The Adult Survivor of Sexual Abuse, Dr. Philip Coyle, NOBTS
- March 1-3 Chaplains Conference, Lew Burnett, HMB
- March 4 Dealing with Stress in the Ministry, Dr. Tom Roote, NOBTS
- March 8 Doctrine of Salvation; Book Study, Art Crisco, BSSB
- March 29 Evangelical Growth in Latin America; taught in English, Dr. Billy Warren, NOBTS
- April 5 The Minister-Deacon Relationship, Dr. Tom Roote, NOBTS
- April 8 Discipline Principles and Techniques for Parents of Children Ages Birth-12 Years, Dr. Philip Coyle, NOBTS
- April 13-15 Advanced Church Growth, Ken Hemphill, SBC Center for Church Growth, and Elmer L. Towns, National Church Growth Expert
- April 22 An Introduction to and Evaluation of Modern English Translations of the Bible, Dr. Billy Warren, NOBTS
- May 4 How to Get Started with Church Growth, Dr. Chuck Kelley, NOBTS
- May 6 How to be Set Free from the Burden of Sermon Preparation, Dr. Don Wilton, NOBTS
- May 10 Life After the Divorce, Dr. Philip Coyle, NOBTS

Accommodations are available through  
The Providence House, (504) 944-4455.

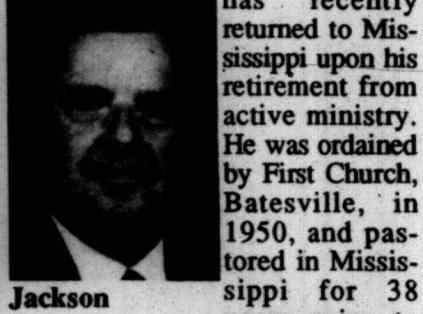
Thursday, January 7, 1993

## Names in the news



Russ Robbins (right), son of Mr. and Mrs. Doye Robbins of Clinton, received a certificate of license from Grace Church, Philadelphia. Presently he serves as minister of music at Grace Church. He attends Mississippi College. Dennis Duvall (left) is pastor.

Bill Barton Sr. of Vancleave has been awarded the first honorary doctoral degree from the Alabama Theological Seminary, Glen Savell, president. Barton has been interim pastor of 31 churches in the Gulf Coast area. He established the Homes of Grace in 1965 which now provides facilities for alcoholics, drug addicts, and homeless men and families.



Robert L. Jackson, pastor in Wisner, La., for the past four years, has recently returned to Mississippi upon his retirement from active ministry. He was ordained by First Church, Batesville, in 1950, and pastored in Mississippi for 38 years prior to service in Louisiana. Churches in Mississippi include Hebron, Sardis; Ingomar; Zion, Pontotoc; Lakeview, Leland; Sturgis; Derma; and Sylvarena, Raleigh. He and his wife, the former Sybil Davis of Batesville, reside at 705 N. Church Ave. in Louisville.

Tierce Green, evangelistic singer and speaker from Arlington, Texas, will perform at First Church, Crystal Springs, Jan. 8-10. He will conduct a Power Breakfast and seminars Saturday, 9 a.m.-noon, for youths. At 7 p.m. Saturday, Green will conduct a youth rally. On Sunday, Green will speak to young people at 10 a.m. and the entire congregation at 11 a.m. At 7 p.m. Sunday, the youth choir will pre-

sent Green's new musical, "Glow in the Dark." For more information, call the church at (601) 892-1149. James Beasley is minister of music.

## Former MBCB employee Jack Roberts dies Jan. 3

Jack G. Roberts, 64, died of respiratory failure Sunday at home.

Services were held Jan. 5 at Wright & Ferguson Funeral Home in Jackson with burial in Lakewood Memorial Park.

Roberts, a Grenada native, was a member of Morrison Heights Church, Clinton. He retired Dec.

31, 1991 after 35 years as supervisor of the Printing Office for the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.

Survivors include: wife, Elizabeth; son, Michael J. Roberts of Pearl; daughter, Dianne Lockley of Meridian; and brother, John J. Roberts of Niceville, Fla.

## Four earn SBTS degrees

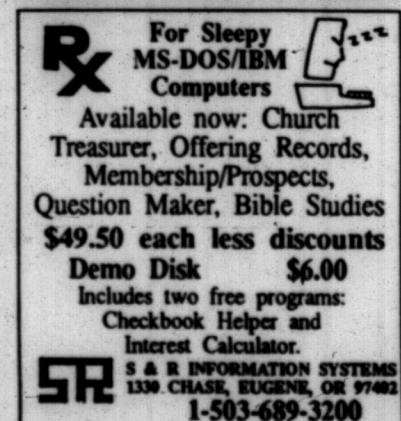
Southern Seminary in Louisville, Ky., awarded 200 degrees in its commencement ceremonies conducted Dec. 18.

Two Mississippians received their doctoral degrees. They are Alvin Holmes Styron Jr. of Magee and pastor of Temple Church, Memphis, Tenn., doctor of ministry; and Richard C. Prassel Jr. of Ray-

mond, doctor of philosophy.

Philip Craig Ellis, Nettleton, received the master of divinity degree.

Michael O. Duff of Columbus also received a degree.



## January classes slated at MBMC

The Mississippi Baptist Medical Center will offer the following classes during the month of January 1993:

First Monday of each month  
Cardiac Rebounders  
Telephone: 968-3090

First Tuesday of each month  
Expectant Siblings  
Telephone: 968-1406

Third Thursday of each month  
HOPE Support Group (grieving)  
Telephone: 968-3090

Begins January 4  
"Natal Fit" Aerobic Classes  
Telephone: 968-1766

January 11  
Arthritis Seminar/Luncheon  
Telephone: 968-1766

January 13  
Cancer Support Group  
Telephone: 968-3090

Begins January 13  
Diabetes Management Skills  
Telephone: 968-1415

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## Churches adopt Expanded Annuity Plan

The following churches have adopted the Expanded Annuity Plan since the Dec. 10 issue of the Baptist Record: Alcorn: First, Biggersville; Lauderdale: Causeyville; Lee: Doty Chapel; Newton: Poplar Springs; and Simpson: Pine Grove.

## SBC requests nominations

Nominations are requested for the openings on the following boards, agencies, and committees of the Southern Baptist Convention: Executive Committee, For-

ign Mission Board (2 openings), Sunday School, Southwestern Seminary, and Golden Gate Seminary.

Letters, biographical, and denominational information concerning recommendations to any of these openings may be sent to Joe Strahan, P. O. Box 416, Beaumont, MS 39423 or Donald M. Crocker, P. O. Box 2674, Laurel, MS 39442 of the committee on nominations of the Southern Baptist Convention.

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Thursday, January 7, 1993

BAPTIST RECORD PAGE 9

## Just for the Record



**Eastlawn Church, Jackson County**, celebrated the completion of the first phase of Breakthrough-Great Commission Sunday School Project. The project was led by Randy Riley of Morrison Heights Church in Clinton. The day began with revival services with Jerry Moore of Lynn Haven, Fla. preaching. A note for \$8,000 was burned which was part of an \$18,500 work project, previously estimated at \$29,500. The day continued with the dedication (pictured above left) of a computer system bought from donations given in memory of former secretary Madge Von Kanel.

Taking part in note burning ceremony on Nov. 22 (above right) are R.D. Turner, Kenney Clark, John Ledbetter, Joe Turner, and M.R. (Mac) Clark.



**First Church, Kosciusko**, recently conducted a GA Recognition Service for 39 girls (pictured). Four girls were recognized for completion of all six GA steps.

They are Kellie Burnham, Alison Wiggers, Laura Pickle, and Kendy Jenkins. Debbie Pickle is the GA leader.



**First Church, Starkville**, recently had Dellanna O'Brien, executive director, Woman's Missionary Union, SBC, Birmingham, as speaker for its annual Foreign Missions Banquet. The goal for the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering is \$60,000. Pictured, left to right, are Rita Land, WMU Area 4 Coordinator; Lisa Thompson, WMU director, First Church; and O'Brien. Raymond Lloyd is pastor.



**The Builders Ladies Sunday School Class and Wilds Men's Class of First Church, Oxford**, prepared and delivered fruit baskets to 170 patients at Golden Years and Graceland Nursing Home and 11 baskets to class shut-ins for Thanksgiving. Pictured, left to right, are Audrey Caffey, assistant teacher, Nina Goolsby,

Bernice Johnson, Dean Chrestman, a house mother at Old Miss where the baskets were prepared and an officer in the Sunday School class; Marjorie Gill and Marie Truss, co-chairman; Ruth McMillan, chairman; and Lake Elliott.



Louise King recently gave a sign to First Church, Potts Camp, Marshall County, in memory of her late husband, T. Dallas King, deacon emeritus, and Sunday School teacher. He also served on the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.

### HMB accepting youth missions applications

ATLANTA (BP) — High school juniors and seniors seeking to be Sojourner summer missionaries through the Home Mission Board should apply by March 10.

The Home Mission Board is also accepting applications for mission youth groups for summer work in various types of ministry, including inner-city missions, resort projects, and newer convention areas, said Valerie Hardy, associate director of the

HMB's short-term volunteer department.

Sojourners are high school students who have completed their junior or senior year and are willing to work six to 10 weeks during the summer. They receive food, lodging, and local transportation while on assignment. Sojourners are responsible for their transportation to and from the site, but assistance is available in some cases. The need for

mission youth groups remains high, Hardy said. Last year, the department filled only 69% of the requests from missionaries and churches seeking students to help with Backyard Bible Clubs, sports clinics, music concerts, and other ministry projects.

Anyone wanting more information about Sojourners or mission youth groups can contact the Home Mission Board at 1-800-HMB-VOLS.

## Uniform Living holy lives



By Chuck Pourciau  
1 Peter 1:13-25

When I was a child I received my share of parental discipline. There were times when my parents would ask the reason for my disobedience and I would say something like, "Well, Jim did it." They would then look at me and say, "You're not Jim." They were telling me that they did not judge me on the basis of Jim's behavior but on the basis of the standards they had set for me. Then they would apply the board (or in my case leather) of discipline.

When God confronts us with our disobedience, how often do we say, "Well, Jim did it?" Yet God, through Peter, tells all Christians, "You're not Jim." He demands that we conform to God's standards. This means that we are to be holy. What does Peter teach us about being holy?

**The command to be holy (vv. 13-16).** In verses 15-16 the command to holiness is very clear. This holiness requires discipline on the part of the believer (v. 13). Girding up of the mind means to remove from the mind anything that will interfere with holy living. Being sober means to be level headed and straight thinking. In verse 14 we are given insight into the meaning of holiness. The believer is not to live as he did before the grace of God was activated in his life. He is different now and set apart unto a different lifestyle. The word translated *holy* literally means *set apart*. Being holy is not something to be attained only by the spiritually mature. It is not an option. It is standard equipment for all believers.

He also stated that the believer is to be holy as God himself is holy (v. 16). Believers are not to use others as a standard by which to judge themselves. Anyone can find someone to whom he compares favorably. The believer is to judge his holiness on the basis of God's holiness. And God does not lower his standard just because man falls short of it. In short, the believer's conduct must be characterized by a distinctively Christian lifestyle.

**The motivation to be holy (vv. 17-21).** In these verses are two motivations to holiness. First, God's judgment is impartial and according to man's deeds (v. 17). This does not teach a works salvation. It teaches that Christian deeds are an inevitable outcome of a life that has been transformed by the grace of God. And as a professor of mine once said, "No fruit, no root." This should lead to holy reverence, for our external conduct is a true indication of our internal condition.

Second, the realization of the tremendous price paid by Jesus for man's redemption should motivate believers to holy living (vv. 18-21). The price he paid was more precious than silver or gold. It was his blood. In verse 20 the love of God was depicted even more profoundly when the reader was informed that the sacrifice of Jesus was destined to take place before the foundation of the world, before God even created man. This was not some accident. God knew about it before he ever created man, but he created him anyway. How incredible is the love of God! Therefore, gratitude should motivate the believer to holy living.

**A result of holy living (v. 22).** A necessary result of holiness is a heart-felt, sincere, unconditional love for the brethren. This too is required equipment for the Christian. John also underscored this truth. "For anyone who does not love his brother, whom he has seen, cannot love God, whom he has not seen" (1 John 4:20). Sincere, unconditional love sets the Christian apart from all others. And that is what holiness is all about, being set apart.

**The endurance of the holy one (vv. 23-25).** The holy one has been born of an imperishable seed, the Word of God. Once it has been declared by God, whether it is the declaration of John 3:16 or the declaration of a sinner's redemption, it endures forever. Nothing can change it. So when God declares to the sinner, "Welcome into the family of God," his place in the family is permanent. This encourages the believer to remain faithful in his holiness, for the rewards that come from being in the family of God are well worth it.

Yes, God's Word is permanent. Therefore, he will never change his mind on his command for the believer to be holy. The believer must spend less time worrying about how difficult it is and more time striving toward it.

Pourciau is pastor, First Church, Louisville.

## Bible Book The Lord of creation



By Guy A. Hughes  
Psalms 8, 19, 29, & 139

The sky seemed bigger in Texas. One night my son and I were lying on the trampoline gazing up at the moon and twinkling stars. "Dad, where up there is God?" "I don't know son but he is there." Silence. "Dad, do you think God is looking at us?" "I most certainly do. The Bible says the eyes of the Lord range throughout the earth to strengthen those whose hearts are fully committed to him" (2 Chr. 16:9). Silence. "You know, Dad, if God is watching us, we ought to look up more often." "You're right, son." Silence.

**The Creator of all things (8:1-4).** Undoubtedly, one night a shepherd boy named David was lying upon a hillside gazing at a thousand points of light. It led him to write, "When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; What is man that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man that thou visitest him?"

The young man knew God, who had the power to create the universe with the stroke of his finger, had the force to enable him to face the fiercest enemy (v. 2). How did the young boy David summon the courage to face the most deadly Philistine, Goliath? What sustained David during those dark days in hiding as jealous Saul sought to take his life? What bolstered him when Nathan revealed David's greatest enemy was his own sin? The power David received to cope with the troubles of life came because he took time to be still, look up, and discover the "majestic" "strength" which could be found in a personal relationship with his Creator.

**The Creator of heaven and earth (19:1-4a).** Day in and day out the heavens declare, though they have no voice, the glory of God. The faithfulness of the sun to rise and set is God's sign language of his own faithfulness. The reflecting power of the barren moon is God's silent testimony of the glory which can take place when a darkened life begins to reflect the power of God's Son. The "line" has been drawn. Creation speaks so loudly the man who refuses to hear is without excuse (Rom. 1:20).

**The Creator ruling his creation (29:1-4).** This Psalm mentions the Lord 18 times in these 11 short verses. The phrase "voice of the Lord" is used seven times. Creation receives its marching orders from God. He controls the flood and the fire (vv. 7,10). Water is often used in Scripture to refer to mankind's need of salvation (Isa. 57:20, Rev. 17:15). The voice of the Lord is used here with the water so we can say the Lord's powerful voice is speaking to a troubled world. This fact was illustrated graphically when our Lord Jesus stood in a boat on a troubled sea and said, "Peace, be still." The disciples marveled, for the winds obeyed his voice. Why should we marvel? It is simply the creator ruling his creation.

**The Creator's intimate knowledge of his creatures (139:13-16).** David's security in the storms of life came because he knew his creator knew him. When we gaze at the vast expanse of space we call our universe it is easy to feel insignificant and small. Yet our God who fashioned the earth with his finger also "knit" us in our mother's womb. He knows the number of hairs upon our head and the length of our days. He knows us better than we know ourselves.

My favorite artist is Joni Eareckson Tada. I value her paintings more than a Rembrandt or a Rockwell. It is not so much her art that stirs me, but the character of the artist. Each stroke of her brush is a testimony of strength and courage. For she is a quadriplegic who paints not with her hands but her mouth. Because she has an intimate relationship with the Lord of creation, she has the spiritual strength to create rather than sink into despair. She is a living parable that the true character of art lies not in the art itself but in the Artist. The next time you look up and gaze into the heavens, admire His artwork, and then worship the Artist.

Hughes is pastor, Friendship Church, Grenada.

## Life and Work The path of obedience



By Laura Russell  
Gen. 15:1-6; 16:1-2; 17:18-19

God continually assures us through his Word that he will provide for and protect us. However, we sometimes allow circumstances to get the best of us and therefore find it hard to believe that God will accomplish his will in our lives. In this lesson, Abram found that the path of obedience was trusting God to accomplish his will, his way, in providing a son for Abram.

**The Lord promises Abram a son (15:1-5).** Abram was a troubled man. He had no son, therefore he was worried about the future. He had left his past behind when he left his native land and his father's people. Now, he had no assurance of a future because he had no son to carry on his life beyond him. He needed assurance. And God gave it to him in verse 4: "Your own son shall be your heir." Then in verse 5 God repeated his promise that Abram's descendants would be as numerous as the stars of the heaven. When Abram was distressed by his troubling circumstances, God reminded him that he knew his situation and he would meet Abram's need.

**Abram believes the Lord (15:6).** In spite of his despair, Abram put his trust in God and in God's promise. God never promises more than he is able to perform. Through his trust, Abram became the recipient of the fruit of his faith. To the generations which followed, he became a hero of faith (Heb. 11:12). Abram knew that God could be trusted. Even though he had no child in his home, Abram knew that God would fill the earth with those who would look back to Abram as father.

Faith that puts us in a right relationship with God involves trusting in him and in his promise to accomplish his will in our lives. Abram was justified or "counted righteous" on the basis of his faith.

**Abram and Sarai devise their own plan (16:1-2).** We have seen that in the life of Abram, it was when he trusted most that he was strongest; when he stopped trusting he was weak. This weakness manifested itself in the plan Abram and Sarai devised. To a Hebrew wife, being childless was a disgrace, a tragic condition. To be unable to have children created a deep and disturbing frustration for Sarai and Abram. It was out of this frustration that they came up with the solution in verse 2. In attempting to provide a way for God to carry out his promise Sarai was willing to disregard the divine standard and give her female slave Hagar to Abram, in hopes that she might bear a son to the family. This substitution of God's plan proved to be sadly inadequate and troublesome.

We know that the exercise of faith consists of patiently submitting and waiting for the Lord's time. When we seek the counsel of God by his Word and by prayer, that which is doubtful becomes possible.

**God affirms his plan (17:18-19).** Although Sarai was 90 years old, she was going to have the joy of welcoming a son. Here was the sure word that Isaac would be born to be the child of promise (v. 19). Isaac would be the son through whom the covenant and the work of redemption would be carried forward.

Despite our motives and actions, God is steadfastly determined to accomplish his will in his way in his own time. As we have seen in the case of Abram, some aspects of God's will involve our active participation and other aspects require our patient trust in allowing God to do what only he can do. May we trust God to accomplish his will, his way, in our lives.

Russell is a member of First Church, Brandon.

# THE VILLAGE VIEW

## The Baptist Children's Village

Ronny E. Robinson, Executive Director



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## Gifts of Honor and Memory

A portion of The Village View is allocated each month to a list of Gifts of Honor and Memory. Many groups and individuals elect to pay tribute to others through this sensitive, meaningful and helpful medium. This feature is hopefully designed to further honor, with taste and respect, those who are and have been special to our special friends.

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The final Baptist Children's Village Board of Trustees meeting for 1992 was held, Tuesday, Nov. 24 on the India Nunnery Campus. Pictured above is new board member, Mr. Billy Pyron (right) with his father, Mr. Kelly Pyron, past president and former member of the Board of Trustees.

Pictured above is Mr. Jimmy Hollingsworth with his mother.

The late Mr. Thomas Hollingsworth was President-elect at the time of his death.



There are not words to express the gratitude and appreciation of The Baptist Children's Village family for each individual and group who helped to make Christmas 1992 a joyous occasion. We thank you for the opportunities our young people had to share in special events such as Morrison Heights Baptist Church's Singing Christmas Tree, First Baptist Church, Jackson's "Candles by Candlelight," and an Italian dinner at Cerami's Restaurant. We say a special "thank you" for everyone who gave of themselves to provide Christmas through prayers, gifts, and parties for children across our state.

# CHILDREN'S PAGE



## Pen Pal Club

Dear Pen Pal Club,  
Hi! My name is Penny Brownlee. I am 12 years old and I am in the sixth grade. I go to Beaumont Worship Center. I would really like to have a pen pal. My hobbies are reading, riding my bike, and swimming. I love animals, especially cats and horses.

Your friend,  
Penny Brownlee  
9 Neron Lott Rd.  
Beaumont, MS 39423

Dear Pen Pal,  
Hi! My name is Meredith Black. I'm 11 years old. My birthday is July 23. My mom teaches me school at home. My hobbies are singing, playing basketball, and having fun outside. I would like a boy or a girl to write to me.

Your friend,  
Meredith Black  
523 Bellvue St.  
Clinton, MS 39056

Hi,  
My name is Tiffany Carpenter. I am 6 years old. I like tee-ball and riding my bike. I would really like a pen pal. I go to Chester Baptist Church. I am in first grade. Please write to me.

Your friend,  
Tiffany Carpenter  
Rt. 1, Box 33A  
Weir, MS 39772

Dear Pen Pal Club,  
My name is Courtney Horton. I go to First Baptist Church in Ripley and I am 8 years old. I like swimming, fishing, and making things.

Yours truly,  
Courtney Horton  
580 CR 200  
Ripley, MS 38663

My name is Tyler Lisenbee. I live in Cabot, Arkansas. I am 7 years old and I am in the first grade. I do home school and we have a lot of fun. My hobbies are basketball, baseball, bike riding, and playing Nintendo. I would like to have a pen pal. My address is: 28 Oakwood Dr., Cabot, AR 72023.

Dear Pen Pal Club,  
My name is Kristen. I would like to join your club.



**Stacy Davis,**  
10, was recently awarded a three year Sunday School perfect attendance bar at Second Church, Kosciusko.

I go to V.C.A. school. I am 8 years old and I am in second grade. I go to Bissell Baptist Church. My hobbies are reading, writing letters, and riding my bike.

I will write you back if you write to me.

My address is:  
Kristen Burton  
Rt. 7, Box 316-F  
Tupelo, MS 38801

Hi,  
My name is Alicia Williams. I'm 13 years old and I'm in the seventh grade. I would like to have a pen pal. If you want to be my pen pal, write to:

Alicia Williams  
Rt. 1, Box 3B  
Enid, MS 38927

Dear Pen Pal Club,  
My name is Brandy Lane James. I go to New Providence Baptist Church. I am 9 years old. I was saved during summer revival this year. My hobbies are reading, riding horses, and swimming. If you would like to be my pen pal, here's my address:

Rt. 2, Box 374  
Calhoun City, MS 38916

Dear Pen Pal Club,  
I want to be in the Pen Pal Club. My name is Christy Farmer. I am 9 years old and in the third grade. I live in Leland, Miss. I go to Leland Elementary School. My hobbies include: reading, writing, playing, watching TV, listening to country music, spending time with friends, and singing. My address is:

Christy Farmer  
108 Cotton Dr.  
Leland, MS 38756

## Books for Kids

**Dave Dravecky**, by Dave Dravecky with Tim Stafford, published by Zondervan Publishing House. A heart-warming account of former all-star pitcher Dave Dravecky's rise to the major leagues and battle with cancer. Although designed for readers ages 8-12, the book is suitable for baseball fans of any age.

**An Alphabet of Bible Creatures**, by Marni S. McKenzie, illustrated by Karen T. Patterson, published by Mercy Press. The 56-page, wire-bound book features 26 poems and full-color illustrations. It is designed for preschool through junior high students, and can be a helpful object lesson aid. Available from Mercy Press, Inc., P.O. Box 1432, Batesville, MS 38606, for \$14.95 plus \$2.95 shipping/handling.



**Riverside Kids** has proven to be an effective evangelistic tool for Riverside Church in Waynesboro. Church leaders began the children's choir with seven members in October 1991. The choir now involves more than 30 children and has led to several children making professions of faith, along with involving parents in the church. Interim pastor T.E. Williams credits the success of the outreach ministry to the blessings of God and the dedicated support of the church family.

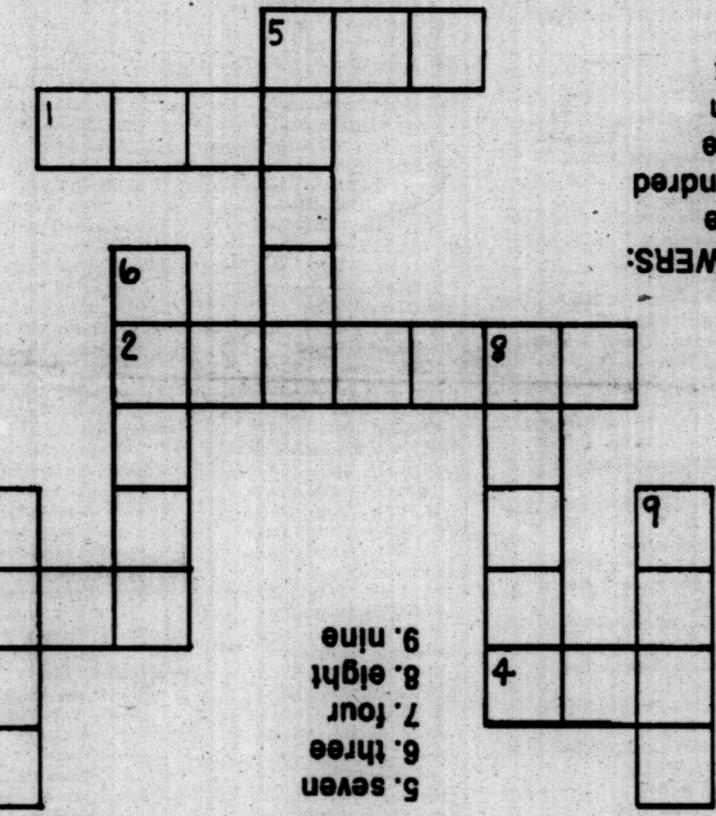
**Do the math.**  
**Spell out the answers.**

### ACROSS:

1.  $3 + 2$
2.  $50 + 50$
3.  $10 - 9$
4.  $5 + 5$
5.  $3 + 3$

### DOWN:

5.  $5 + 2$
6.  $6 - 3$
7.  $8 - 4$
8.  $4 + 4$
9.  $4 + 5$



ANSWERS:  
1. ten  
2. hundred  
3. one  
4. five  
5. six  
6. three  
7. four  
8. eight  
9. nine  
5. seven  
6. eight  
7. four  
8. nine  
9. nine



**Royal Ambassadors at First Church, Philadelphia**, raised \$810 for the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering. The 11 RAs rode 183.5 miles, raising more than eight times their goal of \$100. Those participating were Bryant Jackson, Ty Culpepper, Stephen Kilgore, Jeff Kilgore, Chris Boler, Clay Byars, Craig Brown, Tommy Henry, Chris Posey, Jesse Yates, and Riley Clark. Leaders are Willie Jackson, Harold Blöcker, Earl Owens, and Stan Yates. Bill Jagger is pastor.

## Baptist Record

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SOUTHERN BAPTIST HISTORICAL SO. 00  
901 COMMERCE ST SUITE 401  
NASHVILLE TN 37203

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# SBC loses one church for every two church starts

By David Winfrey

ATLANTA (BP) — For every two churches started in the Southern Baptist Convention, another disbands, reverts to mission status, or for some other reason ceases to be a church, according to a study by the Home Mission Board.

"We have to start 2.2 churches to achieve a net gain of one," said Richie Stanley, author of the study and HMB associate director of planning and services research.

The finding is significant to Southern Baptists' Bold Mission Thrust goal of 50,000 churches and church-type missions by the year 2000, said Larry Lewis, HMB president.

"If we could close that back door, we could take a giant step toward reaching our goal," he said.

The study found Southern Baptists averaged 430 church starts annually during the last 19 years. At the same time, an average 233 churches were removed from association rolls each year for a net annual gain of 197.

Associational directors of missions reported 132 ceased to exist as churches. Another 62 still existed, but as non-Southern Baptist churches. Twenty-two were misreported, directors of missions claimed. No responses were received in seven cases.

Of those that ceased being a church, 106 disbanded, 18 reverted to mission status, and eight merged with other congregations.

Dwindling membership was cited by directors of missions as the greatest cause for churches that disbanded, reverted or merged, the report states.

Problems with the pastor, lack of lay leadership, and financial difficulties were each cited by directors

of missions in at least 30% of the cases.

While some rural areas may no longer have the population to support several churches, Lewis said he fears many of the disbanded churches were in urban areas "where the community has changed but the congregation has not changed to effectively minister to and reach the community."

Churches willing to integrate their congregations or support multiple congregations in one building could continue to be viable, he said. Of the 62 congregations that remained churches but withdrew from the convention, the church initiated the withdrawal in 50 cases and the association initiated action in 12 cases.

In some cases, directors of missions reported churches were dropped from the association's roll because the church failed to turn in a Uniform Church Letter, didn't send representatives to association meetings, or failed to contribute to missions through the Cooperative Program.

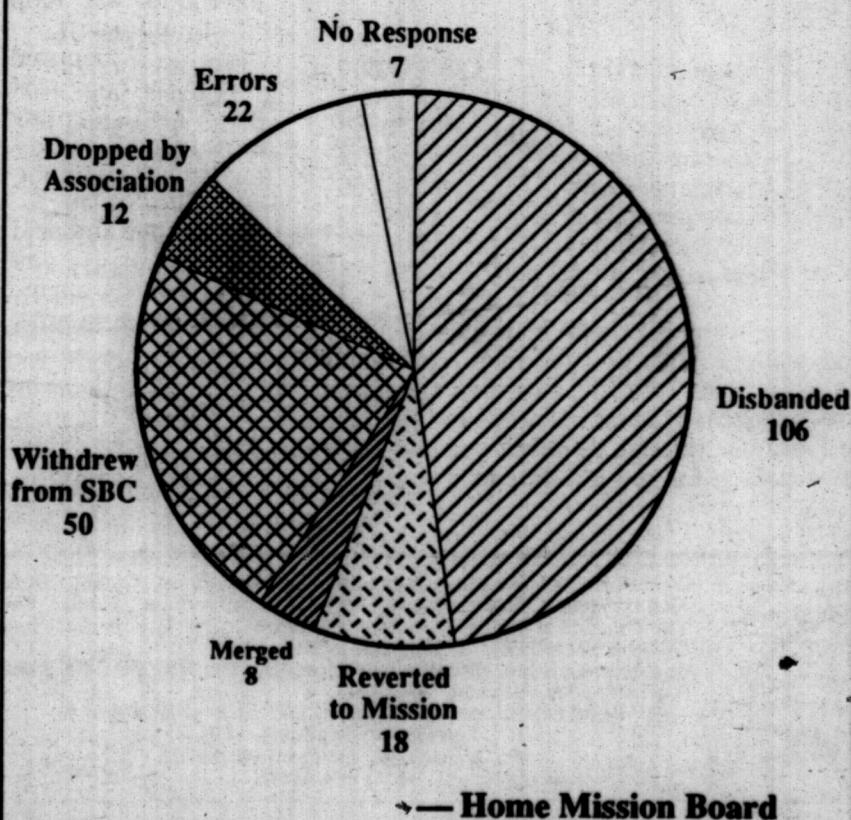
Lewis said he disagrees with associations that decide to drop churches from their rolls.

"The decision to drop a church should be made by the church members themselves," he said. "They should not be dropped because they fail to turn in a Uniform Church Letter or did not turn in a contribution."

Directors of missions responded in at least half the cases that nothing else could have been done to prevent the congregation from disbanding or leaving the Southern Baptist Convention.

Winfrey is associate director, News and Information, HMB.

## 223 SBC CHURCHES DROPPED FROM ASSOCIATION ROLLS IN 1988-89



# The Baptist Record

JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION

Thursday, January 14, 1992

Published Since 1877

*One woman's abortion testimony...*

## Love letters from China

*Jean Allgood taught English for the past two years in a university in China. One of her students was a high school English teacher who has continued to correspond with her. The teacher adopted the name "Renee."*

Dear Jean:

I wish you had a safe and pleasant trip home. Do take a long rest after this hot and busy summer. I can feel how this long summer has exhausted you. Thank you for the gifts you took trouble to send us from Thailand. We were so delighted to have them. It's very nice of you to be so thoughtful for us. When I receive your gifts, I always doubt if I deserve your attention. Especially this time I opened the package. I had some other feelings besides gratitude. It was sin, guilt, and even crime. For I took an abortion just a few hours before I got your gifts. This is something I cannot help. It's a sadness, a misery to me. I had cried so many times before I took the abortion. And I had prayed to God again and again to let me keep the baby. Yet I had to go to the hospital this Monday. I don't cry for it now. But I'm in such low spirit I can't do anything but hold my Benjamine and kiss him and love him. (But why I cry again now while writing to you?) I have been sitting here the whole morning writing to you. I had talked something else in the letters, but I tear them all. I can't pretend to be light-hearted. I feel so low, so sad. I need some consolation in a friend. But it will be all so difficult for you to understand me for doing so. I hope you know about our population policy here. If I didn't go to the hospital, some people would come and take me there by force no matter how big the baby has grown. I hope you'll understand me and forgive me. And perhaps you would pray for me in the church where God will hear you and forgive me too.

I hope to get your letter soon.  
Love, Renee

*Jean continued to write Renee and a month later (Oct. 1992):*  
Dear Jean,

Thank you very much for your letter. I couldn't compose myself while reading it, tears kept running down my face. It's so nice of you to write me this letter. And you even have tried to call me! My mother couldn't have been more agitated in hearing my misfortune than you have been. I have kept it from her. I'm somewhat regret to have told you to make you so sad so distressed. But I knew you were the only person who could ease my heart. And your letter did give me great relieve though I sometimes

wonder if my conduct is really forgiveable.

I tried to call you last Friday morning. The next day I got your letter. Simply wanted to tell you not to worry about me. I've seen so many women suffering from the same reason. Many of them worse than me. Their babies were only a few week to come to this world, but got killed. I hope they will seek comfort in God too just like what I did. Though I do not know if I'll be forgiven. I feel relieved in confessing to Him my wrongs. Though I know so little about Him.

I hope you success in your lecture. I believe you'll make it a very good one. You do have a lot to tell about yourself. You have something in you inspiring and shining. I'm so blessed to have a friend like you. I can't find a more precious friendship in another one. You have brought me closer to God, though I have still so many confusing concepts to make clear. I'm still in darkness. But I can't tell what is so confusing me. I think that is the lack of knowledge. And I think I'm confusing you.

Thank you again for your letter and your call.

I love you! Renee

*Later Renee wrote again expressing a new hope.*

Dear Jean:

Thank you very much for the magazines. I have finished reading all the "Plus" and some other copies. I love them all. They are just what I need now. I'm glad that you understand my feelings and send them to me. I've done a lot of thinking before and after I read these booklets. I've been thinking of writing to you and talk all the feelings I have. But often I found my thoughts were in a great mass. I need time and attention to "sort" them up. But I've been so busy since September.

These copies are great help to me. I hope I could reach them ten years ago when I was so thirsty for them—I even sent a letter for a Bible to a radio station in Guam but in vain for any answer. Though I was born to a society completely different from yours, and was influenced by our own culture and religion, my heart has had a special opening to God ever since I was a high school student. But I had little knowledge or information about Him. I didn't have a Bible. The first time my heart was touched by His name was about ten years ago when I visited a friend of mine. At that time my heart was down for all the miseries my family was going through. A magazine arrested my eyes mainly because of curiosity. It was a Christian magazine published only among the Christians.

(There were so little Christians among us!) This magazine was not allowed to be sold to the public. My friend got it by a very secret way. I begged her to lend me for one day. Then I copied some of the verses and poems. I found them so beautiful, so heart-touching. They were great spiritual comfort to me. I was hunger for more but I couldn't find such articles again since then. That's why I was so anxious when you asked another teacher for the New Testament for me, fearing that he would refuse your requirement. The New Testament and along with the other copies are special to me. I feel the peace and delight in reading them.

I know that I need to read more to know about God. I wish I had met you earlier in my life. I've the feeling that I've lived in darkness for many years before I met you. I've made a lot of mistakes, which, if properly guided, could be avoided. I've hurt the others. I've been unfriendly, selfish, and ignorant. My world has been so gray, so narrow, so unpleasant and lifeless, and shut up to the others. It was you who changed my world and gave me a view to a different sight. I learn from you to love the others and to give help to those who need it and to be kind to everyone. I learn to smile and smile even when facing troubles. Oh Jean, I've been fumbling for words and sentences to express myself. It's annoying to have a language problem when talking to you. All I want to say is that I want to read more about Him. You'd promised to send me an Old Testament when you were here. Would you send it to me now?

I'm ashamed for the many years passed in ignorance of God. And because of this I have failed to conduct myself in to a right way. When I saw you and knew you, I know you'll be a good example to me. I began to care and love my students, my colleagues, and people around me. I began to work harder. The more I do for the others, the more peace I can feel in my heart.

I'm sorry I didn't try to call you again. It's perhaps a little bit silly of me to have the fear of calling you. But I do hate to call you and know not what to say, but numbing nervously like a silly girl. Writing suits me better. It's much more like a heart-to-heart talk, and I can express me more freely and unnervously.

I love you. Renee

*These letters portray not only the sadness of abortion, but the gladness in being introduced to Christ. Please pray for Renee as she continues her Christian growth in Christ.*

# EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

## Is there a bridge for every river?

There are now more than 20,000 U.S. troops in Somalia. Grievous war crimes occur daily in Bosnia and U.S. involvement appears imminent. Have we become the world's policeman now? Is every war a call to arms for our nation? Can we feed all the hungry, care for the larger percentage of the refugees, open our borders for all who desire to come? Can all the problems be dumped in the lap of America? Can we be expected to bridge the river? We must do what we can, but we will never extinguish all the brush fires.

There is an ethnic river swift, volatile, and most difficult to bridge. Will the Serbians and Croats ever live in peace? Can we solve the racial conflicts in our world, or even in our society? The trend apparently is a return to tribal groups. We see new borders being drawn daily along those cultural lines.

There is a moral river today which screams the loudest. Abortions measured in months and degrees; can we find harmony? Tax money is being used for the results of AIDS and the number of its victims increases hourly. Militant homosexuality makes strong demands on society, while victims of crime, rape, and assault go

ignored. Genetic engineering takes cells and organs from aborted babies and use them to keep another alive.

A gambling craze is sweeping our nation. The something-for-nothing attitude crowds into our work, our homes, and schools. Will there really be a winner? Are there bridges for the rivers we face?

There are also the vast rivers of religion. Can we ever bridge the differences between Muslims, Shintoism, tribal religions, and manifold denominations? Are the chasms too wide to bridge? We deal with emotions, traditions, patriotism, genealogy plus the particular teachings of the religion itself. Baptists and Mormons, orthodoxy and neo-orthodoxy, charismatic and creedalism are all boiling in the stewpot.

Add to this the deep thought patterns of various leaders. Mahatma Gandhi said, "I am a Muslim and a Hindu and a Christian and a Jew." Very good Hindu thinking but hardly acceptable to the others. To accept all is saying I really accept none of them. How can we be reconciled with those who accept Christ as one among many, declaring Him to be just one of the sons of God? We face the river but

there is no bridge. Can two walk together except they agree?

We also face an increasing demand for tolerance. Where is this tolerance in the secular world toward Christians? Certain schools require the teaching of evolution. Teach children about Easter in terms of bunny rabbits and eggs, and present Christmas as frivolous gifts and eggnog. The media picture Christians as mental derelicts and buffoons, if at all. Religion is acceptable as long as it does not mean anything nor influence your lifestyle. This standard of tolerance is saying we believe everything but it means nothing.

We will not be tolerant toward Somalian warlords who practice starving their own people, nor of gas chambers for the Jews, nor enslaved children in Asian sweatshops. Nor can we sit idle while our society falls apart, screaming for tolerance. "And the land was not able to bear them," is the comment on Abraham and Lot. They decided to go separate ways: Lot to Sodom and the cities of the plain, and Abraham toward Canaan. There comes a time when there is no bridge and the message is plain: you go your way and I will go mine. The land simply is not able to bear it.

Guy Henderson



### Guest opinion...

## "Thou hast slain my children"

By Richard D. Land

Through his prophet, God denounced the hideous practice of child sacrifice among the people of Judah. Despite the fact that God had always forbidden it (Lev. 18:21, 20:2-5), his people had fallen into the horrendous practice of child sacrifice so commonly practiced among the idolatrous Canaanites.

God's people were sacrificing their children to the detestable Canaanite god Molech. In their idolatrous worship of this pagan deity, the people were causing their children "to pass through the fire to Molech" (Lev. 18:21, 2 Kings 23:10, Jer. 32:35), meaning that they were offering up their children to be burned in child sacrifice. At one time abolished by King Josiah, this outrage resurfaced in the last days of Judah.

"How could God's people do such things?" God says that his people "have turned unto me the back, and not the face: though I taught them, rising up early and teaching them, yet they have not

hearkened to receive instruction" (Jer. 32:33). As they turned away from God, they turned to preoccupation with themselves, their own resources, their own wishes, and their own desires.

God had warned them of the consequences of self-sufficiency and preoccupation with material things (Deut. 6:10-12). They ignored his admonitions. God's people developed an arrogance which assumed that they were their own masters and all they possessed was theirs to do with, and dispose of, as they chose, including "their" children.

God reminded them of the grievous error of their ways. He condemned them for sacrificing "my children" in idolatry. The pronouns used in this passage are revealing. God says they had sacrificed "my gold," "my silver," "mine oil," "mine incense," and "my meat... flour... oil... and honey" to idols (Ezek. 16:17-19). God was reminding his people that "every perfect gift is from above,

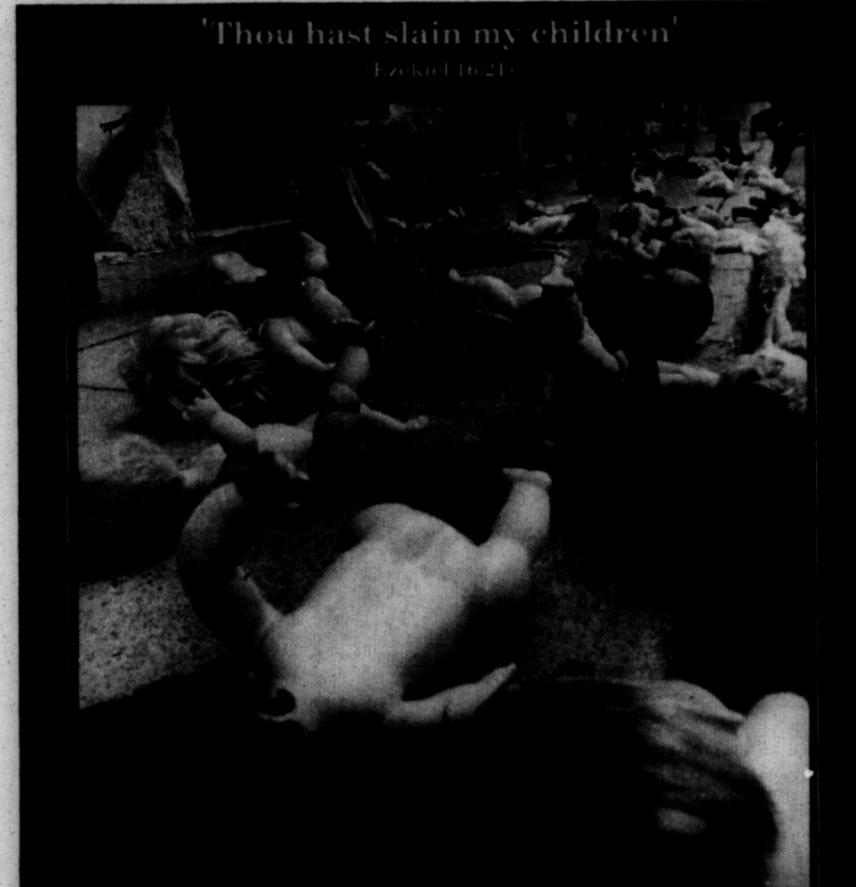
and cometh down from the Father" (Jas. 1:17). They had forgotten that God was the giver and sustainer of life (Gen. 1:26-28) and that they, as well as "their" children and all of "their" possessions, belonged to God.

How could God's people fall so deeply into sin and barbarous idolatry? They did so by turning away from God and worshiping themselves and their material well-being. Judah had forgotten God. They had "not remembered the days of thy youth, when thou wast naked and bare..." (Ezek. 16:22).

How could they have fallen so far away from God? Has America done the same thing? In our self-absorption with materialism, with status, with career, with self-fulfillment, with "things," have we not worshiped gods of our own making? In killing approximately 1.5 million babies a year through abortion, are we not sacrificing our children to the idols of convenience and material well-being? (See CHILDREN on page 10)

Thursday, January 14, 1993

Ezekiel 16:21



Observe Sanctity of Human Life Sunday  
January 17, 1993

Sponsored by the Christian Life Commission  
of the Southern Baptist Convention

**"Mother is the name for God on the lips and in the hearts of little children." — W.M. Thackeray**

## Numbers without end

A study of demography indicates the many changes taking place in America. Orrin D. Morris of the Home Mission Board, Research Division, takes a look at the last 30 years. From 1960-1990 the United States grew by 70 million; now we have 248,710,000 people in our nation. Churches have hardly kept pace with this exploding growth.

The number of births fell from 4,258,000 to 4,174,000 in the 30-year span. The number of births to unmarried women was 224,300 in 1960 and 1,094,169 in 1989. There were 0 legal abortions in 1960 and 1,559,000 in 1987. Families with female head with children numbered 2,722,000 in 1960 and 6,962,752 in 1990.

Longevity provides an eye-opener. In 1960 there were 20,341,000 under 5 and 16,675,000 over 65. By 1990 we had 18,354,000 under 5 and 31,241,000 over 65. The graying of America continues. The racial makeup of our nation has changed dramatically.

	1960	1990
White population	158,832,000	199,686,000
Black population	18,872,000	29,986,000
American Indian	524,000	1,959,000
Japanese population	464,000	848,000
Chinese population	237,000	1,645,000
Filipino population	176,000	1,407,000
Other population	218,000	13,179,000
White pop. % of total pop.	86.6%	80.3%

In the economic realm in 1960 men represented 86% of all workers and women 37%. In 1990 men represented 78% of all workers and women, 58%. In 1960 an urban family of four with an income of \$10,000 needed to make \$44,826 in 1990 just to stay even with inflation.

Truly, the mission field has come to our front door. Churches today must make plans and adjustments if we are to impact today's society.

— GH

## The Baptist Record

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# Controversial prof Simmons retires at Southern Seminary

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP)—Paul D. Simmons has taken early retirement from his teaching position at Southern Seminary in the wake of a film he showed to a class in December that sparked controversy over its sexual content.

Simmons submitted a letter to seminary President Roy L. Honeycutt Jan. 6 announcing his retirement effective retroactively to Dec. 31. Simmons's decision abruptly ended a 22-year career as

an ethics professor at the Louisville, Ky., school.

Simmons, 56, has faced mounting pressure in recent years from seminary trustees who disagree with his pro-choice views on abortion. The last in a series of attempts to resolve the conflict failed Dec. 15 when trustees at a called meeting in Atlanta soundly defeated a proposal from their academic personnel committee to buy out Simmons's teaching contract.

After the closed-door meeting, Honeycutt told reporters the trustees' decision put efforts to resolve the issue "back to ground zero." Several trustees speculated publicly that formal charges of dismissal would be filed against Simmons in the coming months.

Since that meeting, however, new controversy flared suddenly on a different front. Near the end of the fall semester, Simmons showed an explicit video on dis-

abled persons and sexuality to a masters-level class on "The Church and Sexuality."

When several students from the class registered formal complaints, the matter was placed under administrative review. Before the review was completed, however, Simmons announced his decision to retire.

Honeycutt said seminary officials had not requested Simmons' resignation and that the formal

action under consideration in response to the classroom incident did not include dismissal.

"Dr. Simmons has been a productive and effective member of the seminary faculty," Honeycutt said. "In more than two decades of teaching ministry on this campus, students, and faculty colleagues have admired him for his commitment to integrity, his dedication to teaching and his devotion to Christ."

THE SECOND FRONT PAGE

# The Baptist Record

JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION

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## WMU's blueprint for future opens door to Fellowship

By Greg Warner

TALLADEGA, Ala. (ABP) — Woman's Missionary Union voted Jan. 10 to steer a new course for the 105-year-old Southern Baptist organization, and in the process opened the door to work with the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship.

Culminating a yearlong study by a special ad hoc committee, WMU adopted a "vision statement," eight "core values" and six far-reaching recommendations which leaders said will define the future of the mission-support organization.

The plan represents one of the most dramatic changes in the history of WMU, which until now has related almost exclusively to the Southern Baptist Convention's two official mission-sending agencies.

Under the new directives, WMU will support the missions programs of other Southern Baptist groups such as the moderate Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, forge relationships with evangelical missions organizations outside the SBC, become more involved in direct missions, and become active in social issues.

Despite the historic scope of the proposal, WMU leaders said it is primarily an expansion of what the organization already is doing. They insisted WMU will not abandon any of its current activities. To emphasize that point, the board asked the 17-member ad hoc committee to supplement its recommendations with a preamble that affirms the SBC's missionaries and traditional channels of missions funding.

Still the plan is sure to draw fire from the SBC's fundamental-conservative leaders, who wanted WMU to disavow any connection with the rival Fellowship. The two-year-old Fellowship, formed by Southern Baptists displeased with the SBC's current direction, now operates its own missions program and recently hired former Foreign Mission Board President

Keith Parks to lead it.

Because WMU is an SBC auxiliary with an autonomous board of directors, the historic proposal is not subject to SBC approval. But top SBC leaders, including SBC chief executive Morris Chapman, warned WMU Nov. 20 that the SBC might form its own women's organization if WMU supports the Fellowship.

Dellanna O'Brien, WMU executive director, said the ad hoc committee's work was not influenced by fear of reprisal, however, but by WMU's long-standing commitment to missions.

"We fear no one but God," O'Brien said to loud applause from board members. "We cannot be fearful. We have to be faithful and God will protect us."

Chapman, president of the SBC Executive Committee, said in a statement released to reporters that he is "saddened" by WMU's action, which he said apparently alters its auxiliary relationship to the SBC.

"If the WMU is, in fact, saying they no longer exist exclusively to support SBC programs, that is a choice made by them, not by the SBC. We have no choice but to relate to their choice. Apparently, they have chosen a course apart from the traditional auxiliary relationship which has served us well for 104 years."

This is not the first time Woman's Missionary Union has exerted its autonomy against the wishes of the Southern Baptist establishment. When the Birmingham-based was formed in 1888 as the SBC's first women's group, it was over the objections of the men.

This time WMU is challenging SBC officials who insist the Fellowship's practice of allowing churches to divert funds from traditional SBC channels is undermining Baptist cooperation.

In the preamble to its six recom-

mendations, WMU affirms its support for the SBC's Cooperative Program budget and annual mission offerings but also affirms "the right of individuals, churches and state conventions to choose other plans for cooperative missions giving."

The recommendations say WMU will:

— Recommit ourselves to missions, the reason we exist, and relate to others who share our commitment.

— Provide prayer support and produce resources for Southern Baptist groups involved in missions, at their request.

— Produce and market generic missions education resources for other evangelical groups.

— Promote and facilitate effective volunteerism in response to missions needs.

— Identify one social issue each year for specific intervention through national projects.

— Accept contributions to be used for WMU and related missions needs.

Before acting on the recommendations, the Executive Board adopted the vision statement and core values, which board members said were foundational to everything else. The vision statement says: "Woman's Missionary Union exists to enable churches and believers to participate in introducing all persons in the world to Christ."

The core values affirm the priesthood of the believer, God's call to mission, prayer for missions, the giftedness of all women, the biblical mandate to respond to social and moral issues, the need to develop leaders, partnership with Christians around the world, and the need for diverse organizational models for missions.

WMU's new openness may offer little immediate help to the Fellowship, however. O'Brien said

(See WMU on page 10)

## State gives \$21 million to the Cooperative Program

Mississippi Baptists gave a total of \$21,334,387 through the Cooperative Program in 1992, according to an announcement by Bill Causey, executive director-treasurer of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.

The convention board channels the funds from the 2,000 participating churches in the state to Southern Baptist causes in-state and out-of-state. A total of 37% of all monies go out-of-state to such causes as the Foreign Mission Board, Home Mission Board, and six seminaries.

Giving for 1992 was slightly under the projected amount as reflected by the budget which was adopted by messengers to the 1991 Mississippi Baptist Convention. The budget was \$21,588,435.

Income was \$254,048 (or 1.18%) less than that amount. The total 1992 income was 4.20% more than that given in 1991.

Causey noted that the SBC and state agencies only receive their percentage of the budget and that all groups took the same percentage less. As is the usual practice, said Causey, the convention board noted a potential budget shortfall and spent under the amount received.

Designated funds otherwise unallocated from churches totaling \$73,220, were given to Mississippi Baptist agencies and institutions based on the percentages in the budget.

December gifts were \$2,198,114, \$860,893 more than those given in 1991.

## Clinton's home church to provide inauguration music

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. (BP) — The sanctuary choir and brass quintet of Little Rock's Immanuel Church will participate in inaugural ceremonies in honor of President-elect Bill Clinton.

Immanuel's sanctuary choir will participate in a praise and worship service at First Church of Washington, Tuesday evening, Jan. 19. The choir will sing several selections during the worship service. Its director is Lynn Madden, associate pastor for music media.

The praise and worship service

was specifically requested by Clinton and his wife, Hillary, and Vice President-elect Al Gore and wife, Tipper. Clinton has been a member of the Immanuel sanctuary choir since joining the church in 1980.

Composer-pianist Ken Medema also will be featured in the service.

The Immanuel brass quintet, at the request of the Clintons, will play for an ecumenical service Wednesday morning, Jan. 20.

The choir and quintet both have participated in Clinton's gubernatorial inaugurations.

## Morris Chapman's statement

(Released Jan. 11, 1993)

Historically, the WMU's whole purpose for existence has been to serve as an auxiliary of the Southern Baptist Convention. By definition, an auxiliary has no program of its own. The WMU has existed to support SBC programs.

When an organization gets a program of its own, it ceases to be an auxiliary. It becomes its own entity and has its own programs.

When the leadership of the WMU says that they will "promote and facilitate volunteerism," does this mean they will support volunteers of the SBC home and foreign mission boards? Or will they have their own mission program?

When they adopt a social project each year, will it be a SBC project or their own project?

When they accept contributions, will these funds be channeled for SBC missions programs or for their own programs and for programs of other organizations?

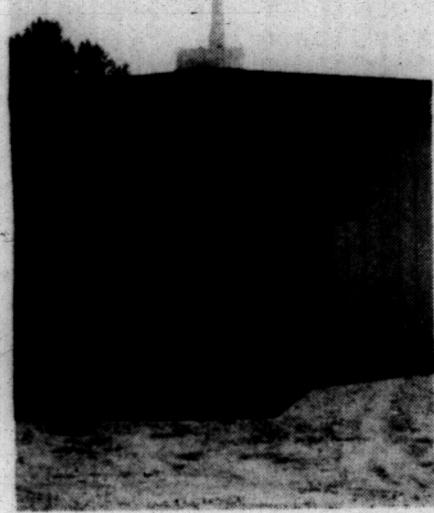
If the WMU is, in fact, saying they no longer exist exclusively to support SBC programs, that is a choice made by them, not by the SBC. We have no choice but to relate to their choice. Apparently, they have chosen a course apart from the traditional auxiliary relationship which has served us well for 104 years.

I had expressed hope to the WMU leadership that nothing would change in the organizational relationship between the SBC and the WMU. I am saddened by this turn of events and I am hoping to get a clarification from the WMU that we might begin to look at the decisions which we now are facing as a convention.



**West Batesville Mission**, below, dedicated its new building in October 1992. The effort began with the purchase of three acres of land in 1990, and the State Missions Offering made possible a \$12,000 site grant. The New Work Committee in conjunction with the Cooperative Missions Department allocated these funds according to the guidelines of the Mis-

sissippi Baptist Convention Board. The mission began as a Bible study in 1989. It was a joint venture of the Home Mission Board, North Batesville Church, and Panola Association. First, Batesville, Good Hope, and other churches and individuals also contributed. Cleophus Rawls, pastor, and his wife, Ethel, are home missionaries appointed church planters. Pictured above, left to right, at the dedication ceremony are Harold Vaughan, representative of North Batesville Church; Cleophus Rawls, pastor of West Batesville Mission; Earl E. Watson, pastor of West Camp Church; Richard Brogan, consultant with Cooperative Missions Department, MBCB; and Rickey McKay, pastor of Good Hope Church.



## Lottery first up as state Legislature convenes

By Paul G. Jones II

On Tuesday, Jan. 5, the 1993 Mississippi Legislature began. Many issues will face the house and senate during the 90-day session. No issue will be of more interest and concern than the possible legalization of a state lottery.

Several legislators have introduced bills which would create a state lottery. Hearings held during November and December by a subcommittee of the House Ways and Means Committee who heard proposals from two multinational gaming corporations — GTECH and Scientific Games. Another company, VLT, is also said to be interested in making a proposal to operate a lottery in Mississippi.

Leaders of the house and senate have indicated a desire to address the lottery issue during the early weeks of the legislature. Many legislators believe there are not sufficient votes in both chambers to pass the lottery which will require a 60% vote since it is a revenue bill. Several opponents have indicated that all legislators need to hear quickly from their constituents about their desire to see the idea of a lottery rejected.

Now is the time for citizens who desire to see a lottery defeated to communicate with their elected officials. All representatives and senators are in their districts on the weekends. During the week, legislators may be contacted at the telephone number and address listed below.

Most decisions about the lottery will be made within two weeks. Now is the time to call and write each legislator. The people did not give the legislature a mandate on the lottery. Most officials want to hear from their districts. At a time like this, we should be reminded of the adage, "the best way for evil to triumph is for good men to do nothing."

Jones is director, Christian Action Commission, Mississippi Baptist Convention.

### How to contact your legislators

To contact the legislators from your area, call the Capitol switchboard in Jackson at (601) 359-3770; or write to P.O. Box 1018, Jackson, MS 39215. Be sure to indicate by name the senator or representative you wish to contact.

## Churches use various methods to declare sanctity of human life

By Tom Strode

abortion, which was announced on Jan. 22, will reach its 20th anniversary in 1993.

The church's young people also established a "cemetery of the innocents" on the front lawn of the property. It contained 100 small crosses, one for each child aborted daily in Dallas County, Yeats said. It served as a profound symbol to the 300 to 400 students who walk across the front lawn daily to South Park's neighbor institutions, the largest junior high and high school in the district, he said.

"There was no funeral for this being that was not born;

An unwed unmom is my chosen plight.

There is no place to go and mourn.

No plot to put flowers for this quiet sin.

Only an aching deep inside to know what might have been."

John Yeats, South Park's pastor, said, "The worst preacher in the world could have preached after that. I'll tell you what, it broke people's hearts."

The dramatic reading was just one of many ways Southern Baptist churches observed Sanctity of Human Life Sunday in 1992. When the 1993 observance is held Jan. 17, it can be expected churches again will find creative methods of communicating the message that God values all life, born and unborn, young and old, healthy and infirm.

Sanctity of Human Life Sunday has been observed the third Sunday in January on the denominational calendar since 1986. The Supreme Court decision legalizing

Southern Baptist agencies provide resources for Southern Baptist churches to use in presenting the sanctity of human life message.

The Christian Life Commission offers sermon outlines for pastors as well as literature for churches. The CLC also has a new video, "The Sanctity of Human Life," which examines such issues as abortion and euthanasia and shares what Southern Baptists are doing to affirm life.

The Baptist Sunday School Board produces curriculum for older children through adults for Sanctity of Human Life Sunday.

The Home Mission Board provides resources and training for the establishment of evangelistic crisis pregnancy centers through its Alternatives to Abortion Ministries.

Strode is director, media & news information, Washington office, CLC.

### Coopers send urgent prayer request, Turkey

Ken and Martha Cooper, missionaries in Ankara, Turkey, have requested prayer on an urgent matter. They were ordered to leave the country immediately; however, they will be permitted to remain until their 90 day tourist visa expires on March 14. Their request for a resident permit has been disapproved. Ken also serves as pastor of the Ankara Baptist Church International.

## Reconsider prayer at inaugural, pro-life leaders urge Graham

By Tom Strode

similar concern.

The pro-life leaders' letter cited Clinton's support of abortion and homosexual rights as examples of such an agenda.

The evangelist resisted pressure to endorse a candidate during the 1992 presidential campaign and his "intention has not been, and is not, to endorse any programs, policies nor positions," John Corts, president and chief operating officer of the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association, said in a letter.

Beginning with President Lyndon Johnson, Graham has participated in inaugural activities for every elected president except Jimmy Carter. He has been invited to spend the night of Jan. 19, President Bush's final day in office, at the White House.

Graham's participation in the inauguration will be a "cause of great embarrassment for all who call themselves evangelical Christians," said Bill Devlin, president of the Philadelphia chapter of the

Christian Action Council.

The evangelist's presence will cause some Christians to think, "Well, Billy Graham's there. I guess Bill Clinton's not such a bad guy after all. We can put up with abortion on demand," Devlin said at the press conference.

"I believe (Graham's) motivation is well-intended," Mahoney said. "It is Bill Clinton who is, I think, using Dr. Graham to try to gain some acceptance."

Mahoney and Devlin called on Christians to ask Graham not to participate.

The Billy Graham Evangelistic Association, in a Jan. 6 news release, quoted Graham as saying, "I am both humbled and honored to be invited" to pray at the inauguration. "Both President-elect Clinton and Vice President-elect Gore have been personal friends for several years."

Strode is director of media & news information, Washington office, CLC.

## Praise for Mississippi Baptists' mission gifts

By Marjean Patterson

Records have been set by Mississippi Baptists during the past year. Gifts to the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for Home Missions and the Margaret Lackey Offering for State Missions exceeded amounts ever given before during one year. What a wonderful way to end — and begin — a year.

1992 gifts to the Annie Armstrong Offering amounted to \$2,135,124.43. For the first time in our history, we have gone over the \$2,000,000 mark in our state. A record amount also was given for State Missions through the Margaret Lackey Offering — \$687,359.13 — came into the Baptist Building designated for mission needs here in our own state.

But this is not all of the good news. While the fiscal year of the Foreign Mission Board covers May through April, at the end of December we have received \$631,948.88 for the 1992-93 Lottie Moon Christmas Offering, which is an increase over 1991-92 of approximately \$200,000.

Many thanks go to all who have prayed for missionaries and their work, and who have given money through these very special mission offerings. And a very special word of appreciation to WMU leaders in our churches and associations who have done such an effective job promoting these times of prayer and giving.

Patterson is director, WMU, Mississippi Baptist Convention.

## Concerts, premieres set for music conferences

NASHVILLE — Afternoon concerts and musical premieres will be features of Church Music Leader-

ship Conferences this summer at both Ridgecrest (N.C.) and Glorieta (N.M.) Conference Centers.

Handbell, keyboard, brass, and woodwind concerts are among afternoon concerts planned for conference performing groups. An adult Christmas musical by Tom Fettke and a children's musical by Dennis and Nan Allen will headline Genevox Music Group premieres each week.

At Ridgecrest, June 19-25, conference preacher will be Calvin Miller, professor at Southwestern Seminary; Camp Kirkland, composer from Jacksonville, Fla., will be worship leader; Milfred Valentine, director of the music department at William Carey College, Hattiesburg, will direct the conference choir and oratorio chorus; Gerald Aultman, professor at New Orleans Seminary, will be organist; and Max Lyall, professor at Golden Gate Seminary, will be pianist. Also appearing at Ridgecrest will be 10-year-old musician Paul Kwak.

At Glorieta, July 10-16, William Pinson, executive director-treasurer of the Baptist General Convention of Texas, will be conference preacher. Worship leader will be John Shillington, minister of music, North Phoenix Church, Phoenix, Ariz.; director of the conference choir and oratorio chorus will be Joseph King, professor at Southwestern Seminary; organist will be Al Travis, professor at Southwestern Seminary; and pianist will be Mark Stamper, minister of music, Lakewood Church, Rock Hill, S.C.



Joe Campbell (left), vice president of the Lebanon Association Ministers' Association, congratulates Joel and Betty Jo Ray during a Jan. 4 luncheon honoring the couple. Ray retires Jan. 15 after 32 and a half years as the association's executive director. Mrs. Ray has served in the association's office for 10 years as administrative assistant. She plans to continue in that role after her husband's retirement.



## Class in session

Some university students complain about classes with hundreds of students. How about 8,000? That's how many Southern Baptist missionary Gayla Corley (seen at right) has for her biweekly Bible classes in Zimbabwe. Corley leads One Way Clubs in 15 public primary schools near Sanyati Baptist Hospital. Every other week students of all the schools attend a Bible

class, where she teaches and shares her Christian faith any way she chooses. Often teachers listen, too. Many area children associate any passing white face with the One Way Club. They run to the side of the road, smiling and holding up their right index fingers to signal "One Way in Jesus." (BP photo by Linda Gaddis)

## Joel Ray retires after 32 years with Lebanon

By Teresa Dickens

Lebanon Association has gone through many changes since it was organized in 1894. In the early years, it stretched from Meridian to New Orleans, running parallel with the railroad. Today, its membership includes churches only in Forrest County. In contrast, the association began with 1,131 members. In 1992, church membership reached 22,499.

The winds of change are blowing again for Lebanon Association. This time it involves changing leadership for the first time in over 32 years. Joel Ray retires January 15.

Ray has served Lebanon Association since June 1960, first as superintendent of missions and now as executive director. During his first 20 years with the association, Ray also was a faculty member at William Carey College, teaching courses in Bible and religious education. Associational offices also were located on Carey's campus.

Under his leadership, Lebanon Association has grown numerically and financially. Other accomplishments include changing Ray's employment status to full-time in 1980 and buying property in west Hattiesburg three years ago to house associational offices.

"Dr. Ray has been a stable, consistent leader for our association," remarked W.A. Fordham, retired pastor of First Church, Petal. "He has provided us with excellent leadership and good advice during some difficult times. We're going to miss his leadership, but most of all we are going to miss him because he has been a good friend."

A native of Alcorn County, Ray first felt a call to ministry when he was 10 years old, only a year after making a profession of faith. Pursuing that call, Ray enrolled at Mississippi College in 1942. Within a year, World War II pulled Ray out of college, when he enlisted with the Merchant Marines. Soon after the war ended, Ray returned to MC, graduating in 1948.

Before graduating from MC, Ray became involved in missions education through his work at the state convention's new camp for boys, Camp Garaywa. He continued working summers at the camp while studying at Southern Seminary in Louisville, Ky., and as a pastor in Kentucky following seminary. His relationship with Camp Garaywa eventually led to his being named the state's first Royal Ambassador Secretary, a position he held from 1951-1956.

In 1956, Ray resigned his job with the state convention to enter New Orleans Seminary. Holding bachelor and master of divinity degrees from Southern Seminary, Ray went to New Orleans to study religious education. He also began his teaching career at the seminary, serving as a teaching fellow and instructor in Christian training. He returned to Mississippi in 1960 with both a master's degree and doctorate in religious education.

Ray explains his long tenure with Lebanon Association as his response to the same sense of call he felt as a young boy to ministry. "This is where the Lord wanted me," he said. "I've been happy here. It has been a rewarding experience."

Like Lebanon Association,

"change" also has affected associational missions, Ray noted. The most notable changes for him are the multiplicity of ministries, growth in the types of visual aids, and the "sophistication" of associational work.

"Long-range planning is a necessity for the association in today's society," Ray said. "That is true because churches are doing more advance planning. So to avoid schedule conflict and guarantee participation, associational leaders must also plan well in advance."

The demand for quality also makes planning essential, Ray added. "Only well-prepared,

knowledgeable conference leaders will draw laypeople today. Long-range planning is the only way to enlist such leaders."

Concluding 32 years of ministry in one place is not a care-free process, Ray acknowledged. Along with being time-consuming, the experience also renews a lot of memories and gives one a great sense of gratitude.

"It has been my privilege to serve Lebanon Association," Ray shared. "It has been rewarding to set goals and see them realized. I believe a strong foundation has been laid. I expect God to do great things through and for Lebanon Association."

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# Vision, prayers house "breakfast club" in Biloxi schoolhouse

By Shannon T. Simpson

Biloxi's historic Van Hook Hall once again opened its doors to students Jan. 6. Idle since Hurricane Elena badly damaged its roof in 1985, the 83-year-old schoolhouse began a new life as the permanent home of the Biloxi Teens for Christ Breakfast Club.

The Breakfast Club is a non-denominational Christian organization of students at Biloxi High School. The group plans to meet in one room of the hall every school day, 6:30-8 a.m. and 3:30-4:30 p.m. The club will serve juice and pastries to all comers, maintain a prayer list, show videos, and host Christian speakers for programs before or after school.

Under the vision and sponsorship of First Church, Biloxi, member Kathy Gorenflo, the partial restoration of Van Hook Hall has brought together unlikely combinations of Gulf Coast community members, creating a place for teens to meet Christ, pray, and fellowship, "to reach kids for Christ, and to encourage those who are already Christians."

Within sight and walking distance of Biloxi High School, the



Kathy Gorenflo, left, consults with Sgt. Donald Vogel, one of about 20 Keesler Air Force Base personnel who have worked at Van Hook Hall since Nov. 1. (Photo by Shannon T. Simpson)

building is owned by Seashore United Methodist Assembly. The Breakfast Club hopes to fill to overflowing the void left in the lives of teens by the exclusion of prayer from public schools.

"Kids are looking for answers," says Gorenflo. "Biloxi High School has the highest teen pregnancy rate in the state. We can't just sit back and say how sad it is that this is happening. We need to make a difference."

"These kids are hungry, and the harvest is ripe," she continues. "They need a place where they can get unconditional love. Our kids are out there drowning in a sea of anguish and sin. Someone has to

make a difference."

Gorenflo's words lie at the heart of her vision for the Breakfast Club. Her conviction has been contagious. Since sharing her vision with others, she has succeeded in recruiting Keesler Air Force personnel, Gulf Coast Baptist Men, ministers, chaplains, civic organizations, Methodists, Episcopalians, Jews, Baptists, radio stations, the Harrison County Sheriff's Department, youth groups, businesses — and the list goes on — to assist Biloxi Teens for Christ (BTFC) in Van Hook Hall's restoration.

"Kathy came to my office one day with my business card in her hand," recalls Greg Fisher, pastor of Biloxi's Living Word of Faith Christian Center, and member of the BTFC advisory board. "Someone had told her to talk to me about what she wanted to do (at Van Hook Hall). So she told me of her vision and we have been working to help accomplish it."

Fisher and Living Word of Faith members have spent an estimated 200 hours at Van Hook Hall. Fisher sees that time as an investment in the future.

"My heart beat is that I believe if we don't wake up and utilize the youth of today, they'll be the ones to turn away from the church in the future. They need more than a pew in a church. They are our future. They are faced every day with temptations I never knew — temptations of crack and gangs. We have to grab hold of that future now."

John Travelbee also has been caught in the momentum of Kathy's vision. Travelbee is administrative officer for the Seashore United Methodist Assembly and serves on the boards of BTFC and Friends of Van Hook Hall, the historic preservation arm of the assembly. Since 1989, Friends of Van Hook Hall has tried to garner support to restore the schoolhouse, listed on the National and State Registers of Historic Places.

"The day Kathy called me to ask for use of (one room in) Van Hook Hall, I had been on my knees, praying to God, 'Help me to say yes,'" recalls Travelbee. "The call from Kathy breathed new life into the whole restoration project," and opened the door for the community to help:

Bruce Stewart is a fellow member of First, Biloxi, and interim superintendent of Biloxi schools. It was he who first suggested Gorenflo approach the Seashore United Methodist

Assembly about using an off-campus location for a Christian student club.

Mississippi Power and Light waived a \$500 connection fee and donated the destruction of an above-ground conduit deemed dangerous; the City of Biloxi waived a \$514 sewer connection fee.

George Holifield and several other members of the Gulf Coast Baptist (Men) Builders spent about 40 hours cleaning out old plaster, hanging sheet rock, and framing out the bathroom.

First Church, Biloxi, has committed to be involved — in serving breakfasts and providing chaperones and speakers. Its singles ministry has worked in excess of 70 hours at Van Hook Hall, and members of Sunday School classes are the Breakfast Club's biggest contributors.

Gary Michels, operating manager of local radio station WQID, offered \$700 in free air time during highest-rated programming to any plumber who would donate supplies to the project. Southern Pipe in Gulfport responded.

The 393rd Civil Engineering Squadron of Keesler Air Force Base, under the command of Major Frank Cox, has contributed the largest amount of sweat equity to the Van Hook Hall restoration so far. Since Nov. 1, about 20 men and women have volunteered their time after hours at the building.

"We have an excellent squadron," says Cox, also a member of



**Key volunteers** in the mission of housing the Biloxi Teens-for Christ (BTFC) Breakfast Club at historic Van Hook Hall include: from left, Kathy Gorenflo, BTFC sponsor; Greg Fisher, pastor of Living Word of Faith Christian Center; Major Frank Cox, chief of operations for Keesler's 393rd Civil Engineering Squadron; Herb Sieger, deacon and Sunday School teacher at First Church, Biloxi; George Holifield, member of Gulf Coast Baptist (Men) Builders team; and John Travelbee, administrative officer for Seashore United Methodist Assembly, which owns Van Hook Hall. (Photo by Shannon T. Simpson)

on-campus equivalent to the Breakfast Club, but was turned down.

At a women's conference in Memphis this summer, she recalls a friend said to her: "You've been making excuses for so long. God is hearing your excuses, but He's already equipped you. What are you waiting for?"

Later, she says, the Lord made it very clear what he wanted her to do. "God has great ideas," she laughs.

Now that the Breakfast Club has opened the doors of Van Hook

Hall to students, Gorenflo says the Lord has more work for her to do: "We're not going to limit the Lord by our vision. We hope the Breakfast Club will be a model for others around the country. We hope to have a video (to that end) available Feb. 1."

"It is our ultimate goal to groom these kids to go to school officials on their own and make a request for an on-campus Christian club. If they ask for it, the school will allow it (because of equal access laws)."

Gorenflo's 15-year-old son, Matthew Lambert, is a sophomore at Biloxi High. He has his own vision of what the Breakfast Club can accomplish: "It can definitely make a big improvement on the city of Biloxi. If we get this thing big enough, maybe Congress would reinstate prayer in schools. There would be so much blessing gained for our nation if we had prayer back in schools. That's what I would like to see happen."

Right now, though, Gorenflo's

focus is on working out the logistical wrinkles in the Breakfast Club's mission. The Keesler airmen have some plumbing work to finish, and the city building inspector must grant his final approval, but the club is already planning next quarter's program schedule.

The morning of Jan. 7, 25 teens showed up for Breakfast Club.

Because two more schools have approached Gorenflo requesting to be involved in the Breakfast Club, it is now available to all Biloxi schools.

There are still needs which have to be met, but Gorenflo is undaunted. An article in the local Sun-Herald newspaper quoted her as claiming Proverbs 16:3: "Commit to the Lord whatever you do, and your plans will succeed."



Greg Fisher, pastor of Living Word of Faith Christian Center, works on the ceiling at Van Hook Hall. Members of Living Word of Faith have put in about 200 volunteer hours at the schoolhouse.

**The Breakfast Club**

• Donations to cover the \$3,500 in outstanding bills

- Adult volunteers to help with donations and chaperones
- Weekly breakfast donations
- Numerous work teams
- Chairs or bean bags
- Tables (6' long each)
- Kentwood water system
- TV and VCR system
- P.A. system for playing music
- 1-2 large window unit air conditioners
- Cork board
- Bibles
- Christian tracts, literature, reference books
- Napkins, toilet paper, cups, paper plates
- Schoolhouse clock
- Coffee
- Sponges
- Soap
- Cleaning supplies
- Piano and other musical instruments

First, Biloxi. "When there's a need, we try to fill it. This has been unique because of the age of the building."

"Whatever Kathy needs here, we'll do it," Cox continues.

The key to the successful response to the Breakfast Club's efforts has been prayer, Gorenflo and Travelbee insist. "We found if we plan less and pray more, we accomplish more than we ever dreamed," each says.

A year ago, she approached the high school with the idea for an

# HouSETOPS

What I tell you in the darkness, speak in the light; and what you hear whispered in your ear, proclaim upon the housetops. Matthew 10:27 NAS

January 14, 1993

HouSETOPS is a supplement to the **Baptist Record** and is produced by the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.

## Cooperative Program Champion Church, First Baptist, Yazoo City



by Debbie Baird Buie

According to Miss Linda Jenkins, who for 36 years has served First, Yazoo City, as church secretary, it is "nothing unusual" for her church to give as much as 30 percent of the church budget receipts through the Cooperative Program. "For us, it is something we achieved several years ago."

To date, 1992 receipts have meant a 29.57 percent given through the Cooperative Program. But for 1993 the church is committed to giving the full 30 percent.

"Since the late 1960s we have incurred more building debts as we constructed a family life center and a new office/Sunday School building. Through all of the building programs we never cut our Cooperative Program giving. In fact," says Jenkins, "we even "tithed" our building fund pledges and gave part of the money designated for the building programs here to build a mission or church somewhere else in the world! This shows you the concept of missions our people have."

R. David Raddin came to First, Yazoo City, in September. He inherited with the pastorate a legacy of missions-mindedness that traces the church's history. Their membership has included such well-known Baptist names as entertainer Jerry Clower and the late Owen Cooper, who served in many Convention-wide capacities as well as internationally through the Baptist World Alliance.

Raddin brought with him a family legacy in giving. "My parents instilled in me from birth the importance of the Cooperative Program in supporting missions work at home and around the world."

The church's written history is a testament to the long tradition of Cooperative Program giving and concern for missions. It recalls how in 1967-68 First, Yazoo City, led Mississippi in per capita giving to missions through the Cooperative Program. Then-pastor James Yates credited that achievement as the "result of a strong emphasis on missions for MANY years. An aggressive WMU, laymen participating in crusades, involvement in pioneer missions, maintenance of a home for furloughing missionaries, and an annual stewardship emphasis, including a Missions Rally Day, as some of the contributing factors." At that time the church was giving 28 percent of its undesignated offer-

ings through the Cooperative Program and was eighth in the state in total Cooperative Program giving.

The number of folks who remember the financial struggles of a convention without a unified cooperative plan of giving are few and far between. There are a number who remember the early years and the excitement of funding the most successful home and foreign missions enterprises in the world. Those who have come later understand the Cooperative Program in varying degrees. In recent years of financial hardship among churches, Cooperative Program giving may be seen as the least painful place to cut.

But as Jenkins says, "if Cooperative Program giving is cut in churches it is likely because there is a lack of dedication to the Program and to stewardship in general."

al. She explains it as a "general spirit of 'let's spend more on ourselves.'"

The testimony of the First Baptist, Yazoo City, bears witness of its members based strongly in stewardship of self and possessions, giving priority to the fulfillment of the Great Commission through their giving history and their missions emphasis.

"Romans 12:1-2 tells us to present ourselves as living sacrifices to God then we will be able to test and approve what God's will is. I believe that doing God's will in giving, in missions, and in ministry is directly related to first making Jesus Lord of all of life. The Cooperative Program is an instrument which can be used by God to spread His word as we give and share as He leads." HT

## 1993 Mississippi Baptist EVANGELISM CONFERENCE

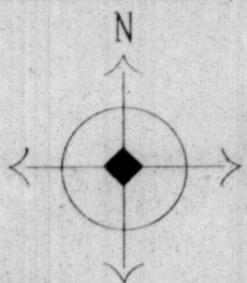
January 25-26

West Jackson Street Baptist Church  
Tupelo, Miss.

### PROGRAM PERSONALITIES

BO BAKER, Evangelist, Irving, Texas  
RICHARD (DICK) BAKER, Music Evangelist/Composer,  
Dallas, Texas  
BILL G. DUNCAN, Executive Director, Alaska Baptist  
Convention  
WILLIAM R. (BILL) HANSON, D.D.S., Organist, Dallas,  
Texas  
VERNARD JOHNSON, Gospel Saxophonist, Fort  
Worth, Texas  
WILLIAM AUGUSTUS JONES, JR., Pastor, Bethany Bap-  
tist Church, Brooklyn, New York  
DANNY LANIER, Evangelist, Little Rock, Mississippi

TIM LEE, Evangelist, Garland, Texas  
J. GARLAND MCKEE, Evangelism Director, Mississippi  
Baptist Convention Board  
JUNE MCKEE, Pianist, Clinton, Mississippi  
PAUL W. POWELL, President, Annuity Board, South-  
ern Baptist Convention  
P. J. SCOTT, Pastor, First Baptist Church, Olive  
Branch, Mississippi  
JACK R. SMITH, Associate Director, Personal Evange-  
lism Department, Home Mission Board  
H. BAILEY STONE, JR., Evangelism Director, Baptist  
General Convention of Texas



# You Lead the Way!

*to the*

## BAPTIST WOMEN/BAPTIST YOUNG WOMEN RETREAT

**February 26-27, 1993**

(Friday supper-Saturday lunch)

*Camp Garaywa, Clinton, Miss.*



Peggy Wallace

**COST:** \$23 per person

**BRING:** Bed and bath linens

### RETREAT

**LEADERS:** Deborah Brunt, Corinth; Linda Donnell, Hattiesburg; Jewel Merritt, Jackson; Pamela Smith, Clinton; Bobbie Foster, Prentiss



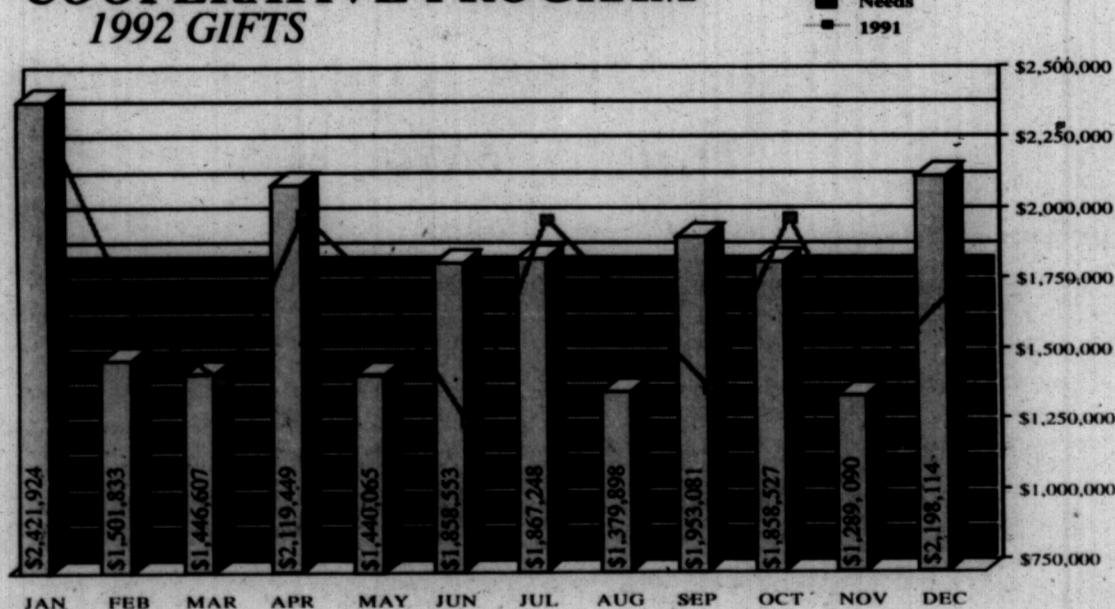
Gwen Williams

**MISSIONARIES:** Gwen Williams, New Orleans; Peggy Wallace, Peru

Sponsored by: WMU Department, MBCB

**Registration Deadline: Feb. 23**

### COOPERATIVE PROGRAM 1992 GIFTS



### PRAYERGRAM Jan. 14, 1993

PRAY for the growth of Baptist work in the former Soviet Union. In the Ukraine some 100 new churches have been begun since the last report given in 1990. Ukrainian Baptists have bought a two and a half acre plot of land to build a Bible School. In Russia 216 churches have been started. Effective evangelistic work is being done by radio and TV. Pray for the difficulties faced in the areas of Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan and Tadzhikistan, which are predominantly Muslim. Thank God that the work in these areas is growing.

PRAY for Japan as missionaries and convention leaders intensify their efforts in church planting. More than 10 missionary families have moved into areas where the need for churches is highly strategic.

PRAY for Carlos and Myrtice Owens, who have recently retired from Namibia (southwestern Africa).

PRAY for healing for Carlos, who has several serious health problems.

PRAY for the safety of missionaries in Colombia, South America. These missionaries increase their security measures and urge Southern Baptists to pray for the situation in Colombia and for them as they go about their normal duties.

PRAY for Jerry St. John, language missions director for South Carolina Baptist Convention. Pray for the development of language congregations in South Carolina.

PRAY for Eddie Henson, Director of Missions for the Greater Huntington Baptist Association of West Virginia. Among their many needs for prayer, remember three: A van for the Lincoln Baptist Church; visas to be granted for Baptists of that area who want to go on an evangelistic trip to Nigeria in Feb. 1993. (They were denied visas in Nov. 1992) and for Mary, Eddie's wife, who had cancer surgery in June, 1992, and again in August 1992. She seems to have recovered remarkably well.

PRAY for Jacob Kim of Wichita, Kansas. Jacob is pastor of the Wichita Korean Baptist Church. Pray for the continued growth of the church as it reaches out to the Korean community with the gospel of Jesus Christ.

PRAY for the MasterLife Workshop to be held at the South Louisville Baptist Church, Louisville, Miss., on two consecutive weekends, Jan. 21, 22 and 23 and Jan. 28, 29 and 30, 1993.

PRAY for the next group of ten (five pastors and five laypeople) to go to Zimbabwe to participate in the Mississippi-Zimbabwe Partnership, Feb. 8-25, 1993.

PRAY for the leadership of the Mississippi Baptist Convention and the members of all the churches, that we may join together to glorify God in our State. God help us to highlight the accomplishments of our combined efforts in His name. HT

## Women in Missions

The Mississippi Baptist Woman's Missionary Union's Women in Missions program has a number of volunteer opportunities for those interested in participating in any of several partnership ventures.

The state convention has partnerships going in Zimbabwe, Alaska, and Illinois. Projects are available in all three places.

In Zimbabwe, women are needed to do secretarial work such as computer work, regular typing and filing, April 30-May 8. Trip cost would be \$2,350.

In Alaska, a musician is needed for sessions and four women are needed to work with preschoolers for the WMU Houseparty in Anchorage, April 22-24. Cost would be \$700. Also in Anchorage, a Baptist Young Women team of 12, plus a cook, is needed for a VBS camp for internationals, June 21-25. Cost would be \$825.

In Anchorage and Fairbanks college students are needed as counselors for GA camp for one week each month in June or July. Cost would be \$600.

Two projects are on the boards for Illinois. One is in East St. Louis where women are needed to lead a back-to-school event for children for a Christian Activity Center, Aug. 13-15. Cost would be \$225. In Chicago, Uptown Baptist Church needs women to lead in Backyard Bible Clubs and other activities as requested, July 24-Aug. 1. Cost would be \$450.

Those interested in participating in any of these projects should contact Pam Keith in the WMU office at 968-3800. HT

## Chaplains Association to Meet in Tupelo

The Mississippi Baptist Chaplains Association will meet on Tuesday, January 26, at noon in the Fellowship Hall of the West Jackson Street Baptist Church in Tupelo. This will be a time of good food, fellowship, and sharing on the subject of the "Chaplain's Role in Times of Natural Disaster." Joe Stovall, president of the Association, encourages all chaplains over the state and especially those who live in North Mississippi to attend. For more information please contact Richard Brogan, Consultant, Cooperative Missions Department, Mississippi Baptist Convention Board. HT

## Church Weekday Clinics

(kindergarten, daycare)

February 6 -- Hattiesburg, FBC  
March 6 -- Jackson, FBC  
April 3 -- Oxford, FBC

Call 968-3800 ext. 3887 for more information.

## SKILLED PAINTERS REQUESTED FOR ANCHORAGE, ALASKA

The interior of the State Convention Office in Anchorage needs a coat of paint. They have requested one or two volunteers to paint the building next summer.

The convention will provide paint and housing for one or two persons who would volunteer their skills in this manner and provide their own travel.

Please contact the Partnership Office at 968-3800 or at P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205. HT

## BIVOCATIONAL MINISTERS AND WIVES BANQUET

during Evangelism Conference

Tuesday, January 26, 1993  
5:00 p.m.

Quincy's Restaurant in Tupelo  
No cost-No registration  
--invite others!

## All Aboard!



## Cradle Roll-Homebound Tour

March 8-11, 1993

Conference Leaders:

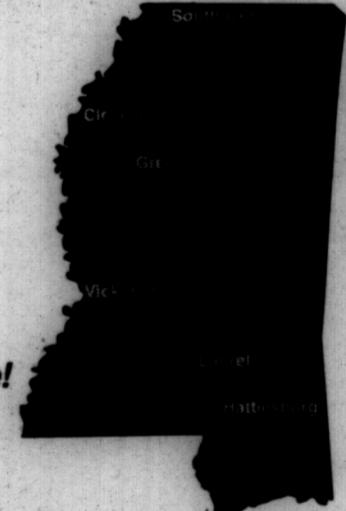
Ann Liles  
and  
James Berthelot

March 8	9:45 - 11:45 a.m.	F.B.C.	Laurel
March 8	7:00 - 9:00	Temple	Hattiesburg
March 9	9:45 - 11:45 a.m.	F.B.C.	Pearl
March 9	7:00 - 9:00 p.m.	F.B.C.	Vicksburg
March 10	9:45 - 11:45 a.m.	F.B.C.	Greenwood
March 11	9:45 - 11:45 a.m.	Colonial Hills	Southaven
March 11	7:00 - 9:00 p.m.	F.B.C.	Cleveland

Make Plans to Attend This Sunday School Growth Conference!

Sponsored by:

Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, Sunday School Department



# 1993 MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST STATE SENIOR ADULT CHOIR FESTIVAL



## GENERAL INFORMATION

1. Choirs will sing two selections of the director's choice not to exceed eight (8) minutes total time.
2. At check-in, directors should provide two copies of the anthems to be adjudicated. Please be certain the name of the church appears on each copy of music. Number every measure clearly, including the introduction. Any part of a measure counts as a full measure when numbering.
3. Memorization of the anthems for adjudication is not required, but is encouraged.
4. Accompaniment must be piano and/or organ.
5. Certificates will be presented.
6. Choirs should remain for the entire festival.
7. Choirs may attend and not sing for adjudication.

## REGISTRATION FORM

1993 Senior Adult Choir Festival  
Daniel Memorial Baptist Church, Jackson, Miss.

MARCH 9, 1993

Church \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Choir Name \_\_\_\_\_

Choir Director \_\_\_\_\_

No. Members Attending \_\_\_\_\_ x \$5= \_\_\_\_\_  
(Make checks payable to Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.)

OUR CHOIR WILL SING THE FOLLOWING SELECTIONS FOR ADJUDICATION:

**March 9, 1993**  
**Daniel Memorial Baptist Church**  
**Jackson, Mississippi**

**SPECIAL GUEST ARTIST**  
**Mary McDonald**  
**Purifoy Publishing Company**

## REGISTRATION – 8:30 a.m.

Registration for the Senior Adult Choir Festival must be made by **February 26, 1993**. There is a registration fee of \$5.00 per person which includes lunch. A check for total registration fees should be sent with the registration form to the Church Music Department, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205, in order to complete registration.

## SCHEDULE

8:30 a.m.	Registration
	Welcome
	Choirs Sing
Noon	Lunch
1:00 p.m.	Choirs Sing
Mid-afternoon	Dismiss

1. title \_\_\_\_\_

composer \_\_\_\_\_

publisher \_\_\_\_\_

2. title \_\_\_\_\_

composer \_\_\_\_\_

publisher \_\_\_\_\_

Please check one of the following:

- We prefer to sing in the morning.
- We prefer to sing in the afternoon.
- We have no preference when we will sing.
- Our choir will not sing for adjudication.

Our favorite hymn is \_\_\_\_\_

Please return registration form and registration fees to the CHURCH MUSIC DEPARTMENT, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205 no later than **February 26, 1993**.

# BREAK THROUGH

An **Understanding Breakthrough Workshop** (Formerly called Great Commission BREAK-THROUGH Conferences) **Is Coming to Your Area**

**This will be a hands-on workshop designed to have pastors lead the church staff and Sunday School workers through a process to evaluate the church's position in experiencing BREAK-THROUGH and developing a plan to proceed through the breakthrough process.**

- Workshop times on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday: 7:00-9:00 p.m.
- Workshop times on Wednesday: 10:00 a.m.-noon
- No meals will be provided at workshop sites.

## UNDERSTANDING BREAKTHROUGH WORKSHOPS

### FEBRUARY 1, MONDAY

FBC, Ripley	FBC, Corinth
Clarksdale, Clarksdale	FBC, Holly Springs
Hernando, Hernando	

### FEBRUARY 2, TUESDAY

FBC, New Albany	FBC, Tupelo
FBC, Cleveland	FBC, Batesville
North Oxford, Oxford	

### FEBRUARY 8, MONDAY

Poplar Spgs. Dr, Meridian	FBC, Louisville
FBC, Kosiusko	Parkview, Greenville
FBC, Lucedale	

### FEBRUARY 9, TUESDAY

FBC, Quitman	Ackerman, Ackerman
Grace, Philadelphia	FBC, Greenwood
FBC, Pascagoula	

### FEBRUARY 10, WEDNESDAY

Highland, Laurel	Faith, Starkville
FBC, Carthage	FBC, Grenada
FBC, Gulfport	

### FEBRUARY 11, THURSDAY

Bethany, Bay Springs	Caanan, Columbus
Forest, Forest	FBC, Houston
FBC, Picayune	

### FEBRUARY 15, MONDAY

FBC, Magee	FBC, McComb
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### FEBRUARY 16, TUESDAY

FBC, Crystal Springs	Collins, Collins
Woodville, Woodville	FBC, Columbia
FBC, Brookhaven	

### FEBRUARY 17, WEDNESDAY

Immanuel, Hattiesburg	Park Place, Brandon
Hinds/Madison Associational Office, Jackson	



# Letters to the editor



## Letters to the Editor policy

Unsigned letters will not be printed. No multi-copy or form letters will be used.

All correspondence is subject to editing. Letters must be limited to 250 words.

No more than one letter will be printed during a 3-month period from any individual. Each correspondent must include an address and the name of his or her church.

When in the judgment of the editor a given issue has received sufficient attention, correspondence dealing with that subject will be terminated.

In special instances, when to identify the writer of a letter might cause undue embarrassment, the name will be withheld.

Correspondents should refrain from personal attacks.

## Plea for return

**Editor:**

I read the Dec. 3 article, "God Needs No Help." But I ask a question: Is it not man who needs help? "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23). So, for man's sins did Jesus Christ go to the cross and be crucified. Now who needs whom? God is perfect; mankind is the sinner.

Maybe God didn't need the righteous man to carry out his plan, but he used man to show he loves us and forgives us — if we repent from our sins and accept Christ Jesus as our Savior and Lord. Mankind needs the love of God for his own salvation.

It is a sad fact to know that the history of civilization of man is written in our own blood. Freedom is not free — if so, why are our graveyards full of young patriots who fought and died so we can live in freedom. So as Christians, must we stand silent and watch "old glory die" and our freedom taken away? God forbid.

Southern Baptists, enter 1993 as a year of prayer, a prayerwatch, praying around the clock for our nation. Can we pray for our nation and not rebuke our leaders, national, state, or county, to repent of their sins, and ask God through Christ Jesus to forgive them.

The world depends on the United States for food, and the world is still hungry. If we fall as a nation, what will happen? Will the world's people die of starvation?

It is we mankind who have turned our backs from God. God has never turned his back upon the world. He never will, so it is man who needs God.

Thomas W. Martin  
Batesville

## Lesson from history

**Editor:**

I have just finished reading Eusebius' *The History of the Church*. In book 8:1 I came across this astounding paragraph, which described what happened to the church during a lull in martyrdom of Christians during the early reign of Diocletian:

"How could one describe those mass meetings, the enormous gatherings in every city, and the remarkable congregations in places of worship? No longer satisfied with old buildings, they

raised from the foundations in all the cities churches spacious in plan. These things went forward with times and expanded at a daily increasing rate, so that no envy stopped them nor could any evil spirit bewitch them or check them by means of human schemes, as long as the divine and heavenly hand sheltered and protected its own people as being worthy. But increasing freedom transformed our character to arrogance and sloth; we began envying and abusing each other, cutting our own throats, as occasion offered, with weapons of sharp-edged words; rulers hurled themselves at rulers and laymen waged party fights against laymen, and unspeakable hypocrisy and dissimulation were carried to the limit of wickedness.... But alas! realizing nothing, we made not the slightest effort to render the deity kindly and propitious; and as if we had been a lot of atheists, we imagined that our doings went unnoticed and unregarded, and went from wickedness to wickedness. Those of us who were supposed to be pastors cast off the restraining influence of the fear of God and quarreled heatedly with each other, engaged solely in swelling the disputes, threats, envy and mutual hostility and hate, frantically demanding the despotic power they coveted."

Eusebius then goes on to tell how God allowed the destruction of the churches from the reign of Diocletian to Maximian as a punishment.

I am a believer of Tonybee's philosophy of history, which is a spiralling cycle. Eusebius described what we have seen in our day, and, God forbid, may be describing the destruction of the church's influence in our time.

Earl Kelly  
Jackson

## Trouble may be plan

**Editor:**

This is in response to the "Plea for reclamation of SBC" by W. Levon Moore in the Dec. 31 edition of the *Baptist Record*.

Has anyone considered that the trouble in the SBC may be part of God's overall plan of breaking down denominational walls which isolate and separate his family? Southern Baptists have been a very proud people — proud of their denomination, distinctiveness,

their history, and tradition. Too proud.

Moore emphasized we "must commit ourselves in order to preserve the best that is left of a great denomination." However, many Southern Baptist preachers over the years have decried the large inactive church membership and the lack of commitment on the part of so many members.

Of the ten distinctions listed in the article, No. 10 was "The Lordship of Jesus Christ over the church." Shouldn't that have been No. 1? And it seems to me No. 9, "The person, power, and presence of the Holy Spirit," should have been No. 2 on the list. When the winds of renewal were blowing in the early '70's, many Southern Baptist churches stood firmly against the manifestation of the person, power, and presence of the Holy Spirit, which began, in my opinion, the downfall of the denomination.

Let's lay down "reclamation of our denomination" as a "worthy goal." Instead, let us get about our Father's business of networking and building unity in the family of God among not only Southern Baptists, but other churches who also proclaim Jesus as Lord (and there are many). Christ himself prayed for unity of his followers four times in John 17 (vv. 11, 21-23).

As long as Southern Baptists are concentrating on their distinctiveness, divisions, or on reclamation of a denomination, their attention cannot be focused upon unity of Christ's church — his ultimate program in this day... "that the world may know...."

Portia McGehee  
Jackson

## WMU bylaw change

**Editor:**

The WMU board is proposing a change in its bylaws.

The change is as follows: Add to the end of Article V officers Section 1. "The officers shall have served on the Executive Board for at least one year."

Julie Otis, chairman  
Policy Personnel Committee  
Tupelo

## A Christian nation

**Editor:**

The Christian history of the United States of America is a matter of public record; and it is voluminous! I have many volumes in my own personal library.

That America was established as a Christian nation is not a matter of question but rather a matter of fact. That this is a Christian nation is attested to by the first Chief Justice of the United States Supreme Court, John Jay; by the Trinity decision of the Court in 1892; and by many of our founding fathers in sundry documents.

Yet, when our Christian gover-

nor, the Honorable Kirk Fordice, says "This is a Christian nation," the pro-socialist major metropolitan media goes "bonkers." How do they get away with it?

It's simple! The last 100 or so years of this republic, the enemy has crept in and sown tares while the Christians slept in "heavenly peace." Like I tell my Sunday School class, "Christians hate conflict" but it's not scripturally sound, the Lord himself telling them they would have conflict in this world. That they have been conditioned by bad leadership to believe they should hear no evil, see no evil, is pretty much obvious.

One of today's big problems is that neither our leading teachers nor our preachers are good students of history. The missionary effort of Christopher Columbus to bring the gospel of Christ to the New World; the signing of the Mayflower Compact in anno Domini (A.D. — the year of our Lord) 1620; the Puritan effort to establish godly government in the Massachusetts Bay Colony; the signers of the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution, most all Christians; all these things plus many more are a matter of public record in American history.

May we be blessed with the courage to be the "light of the world" and the "salt of the earth" in His name. Let's restore this republic.

Bob Wells  
Hazlehurst

## Show solidarity

**Editor:**

Lately, I have been party to discussions concerning the "liberal" media and have found a wide range of public opinion as to how to restrain their rising tide of power and influence. Regardless of race, denomination, political affiliation, or gender, a greater majority seems to agree that the media exist as possibly the most powerful body of "unelected" officials in the world today, the constituents of which can exercise little or no influence or restraint upon the decision-making process. As Christians, I do not think we should wait or insist upon government aid to legislate responsible programming and reporting. Any responsible action should be carried out at a grass roots level. That's me and you.... However, I do not think just turning off the television will send a message to the appropriate people. Therefore, we must try another route, perhaps one that we can all participate in. As evidence of your convictions, let us choose the standard of a white ribbon, placed in a visible site, as evidence of our solidarity and a reminder of our Christian responsibilities to our children and this nation. A silent witness, but then again, one that can't be ignored or disregarded.

J. Kris Camichael  
Jackson

## Thanks for help

**Editor:**

I would like to commend Mississippi's Southern Baptists for all they did to help victims of the recent tornado.

My family would especially like to thank Wayne Gullet, Danny Spratlin, Wayne Cobb, and all the other wonderful men of the Calhoun County Baptist Association who came and put a new roof on our home after the tornado came through Choctaw County. They were a tremendous help to us at a very difficult time. We could truly see Christ in them.

We are also indebted to Charles Gordon, director of missions, and the churches of Choctaw and Webster associations for their generous financial support. May God bless you all.

The Bob Mamrak Family  
Weir

## Whose confusion?

**Editor:**

I read Levon Moore's guest opinion, "A prayer for reclamation of the SBC," in the Dec. 31 *Baptist Record*. How refreshing to read what promised to be a very objective opinion. Then came the third to last paragraph:

"Many efforts to 'save us' have almost destroyed us." He is referring, facetiously, it seems, to the efforts of the "conservative" side of the convention to "saving us." I do not agree that the convention leadership over the last 12 years, who have been duly elected have almost destroyed anything. The destructive moves have been made by those who could not accept the will of the majority, and those who yearned for tenure for the rest of their lives.

As a member of the Home Mission Board of Trustees, I am at a loss as to what Moore is referring as regards this board. I can attest to the fact that there is no confusion, conflict, lack of trust, or deterioration in this agency. Our mission is clear — to win the lost to Jesus Christ; placing emphasis on church planting; sending more missionaries; evangelism; and ministry. This is accomplished while trimming down the central staff at the HMB. As to other agencies, I assume he is referring to the retirement of many of their "heads." Unfortunately, executives sometimes resist "stepping down" to make way for "new blood" and a change in leadership and direction.

If the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship would live up to their name, "Cooperative," they would cease attempts to expand by undermining the elected leadership of our convention. It is this movement that has caused the confusion in the convention. Let them come back home or leave.

Louie Odom  
Pearl

Thursday, January 14, 1993

# Four New Orleans professors complete combined 75 years

During New Orleans Seminary's seventy-fifth anniversary year, four professors who have given a combined total of 75 years of service to the seminary have completed their work, three retiring and one resigning to work on a national level with the Baptist Sunday School Board.

Donald W. Minton (32 years), Carroll B. Freeman Sr. (18 years), Harold T. Bryson (16 years) and Bob E. Simmons (9 years) were all honored at a recent faculty dinner.

Besides spending a major portion of their years of service at New Orleans Seminary in a teaching or administrative role, all four men are graduates of NOBTS.

Minton will continue to reside in Slidell.

Freeman was a pioneer in the field of aging before joining the

seminary faculty as a professor of psychology and counseling in 1974. In his previous position as area coordinator for the Mississippi Council on Aging, he established many model programs; one was the first program providing government funding to assist the elderly.

Freeman served four churches, including First Church, Holly Springs (1951-52), in the areas of youth, education, music, and church activities. Freeman and his wife, Hellon, live in Anniston, Ala.

Simmons joined the New Orleans Seminary faculty in 1983 as a professor of missions. From 1975 to 1983 he served with the Foreign Mission Board, first as pastor of International Baptist Church in Hong Kong for one year and then as a professor at the

Philippine Baptist Theological Seminary.

A native of Leland, Simmons served as pastor of Raymond Church, Raymond (1955-57); Oak Forest Church, Jackson (1957-63); and 15th Avenue Church, Meridian (1963-74). Simmons and his wife, Mary, live in Meridian.

Bryson has resigned his position as chairman of the Division of Pastoral Ministries and professor of preaching at New Orleans Seminary to become the national consultant on preaching and worship for the Baptist Sunday School Board.

A native of Tupelo, Bryson served as pastor of Euclatubba Church, Saltillo; Good Hope Church, Richton; First Church, Sumrall; and First Church, Carthage.

## Former Jim Jones aide becomes soul-winner for biblical faith

By Cynthia Wright

RIVERSIDE, Calif. (BP) — When Jim Jones led more than 900 people in committing suicide in Guyana in 1978, the leader of the San Francisco-based People's Temple, Hattie Newell, lost 12 family members.

Newell, a licensed vocational nurse, is now a member at Immanuel Baptist Church in San Bernardino.

"If anyone ever had a reason not to trust the Lord, it's Hattie," said John Welch, minister of administration at Immanuel.

"She lost her family while serving in what she believed was a Christian organization but she is now a soul-winner who ministers to everyone," Welch added.

Newell became involved with the People's Temple in Los Angeles when members of her Baptist church began fighting among themselves. At the invitation of a friend, Newell's aunt and mother began attending the People's Temple with their children.

"I wish I had followed my father," she said thoughtfully. "He got up and walked out the first time he visited."

## Eight receive Southwestern degrees

Russell H. Dilday, president of Southwestern Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas, awarded degrees to 251 graduates in its commencement ceremonies held Dec. 18.

Receiving masters' degrees were Melissa A. Carte, Long Beach; Barry W. Grantham, Jackson; Carl V. Nieman, Hattiesburg; Terry R. Tinsley, Columbus; Brent L. Johnston, Madison; Johnnie R. Neal, Laplace; Mark H. Ransey, Tupelo; and William P. Rayburn, Canton.

Eventually, Newell moved to San Francisco where she acted as companion and personal bodyguard to Jones' wife, Marceline.

When Jones traveled to Guyana, Newell's family, including brothers and sisters ranging in age from 11 to 15, accompanied him.

Newell believes God had other plans for her. "I kept trying to go," she remembered, "but Jim Jones never would let me. Every time I would think of a reason to go, he would tell me to send someone else."

Two of her brothers left Guyana before the Nov. 18, 1978, mass suicide, one of them that very morning.

Her experiences, not only with the People's Temple, but with sexual abuse during her childhood, motivates her to concentrate on the

importance of educating youth.

"I wasn't nurtured when I thought I became a Christian at the age of 11. I lacked sufficient knowledge of the Bible and, as a result, was almost destroyed," she said.

"Read your Bible; listen to God's Word. Listen to your youth pastor," Newell urges the youth to whom she speaks.

"The services at the People's Temple looked almost exactly like any other church service," Newell warned. "Only a person with a strong biblical background would have noticed Jim Jones didn't really preach God's Word."

"Pastors must preach the Word," she said, "because false teachers are here to snatch people away."

Wright is supervisor of research and records at California Baptist College.

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E. R. Willis, P. O. Box 556, Clinton, MS 39056.

**MORGANTOWN BAPTIST CHURCH,** Natchez, is seeking a full-time music and youth staff person. Resumes should be sent to Search Committee, Morgantown Baptist Church, 2164 Second St., Natchez, MS 39120. Telephone 442-2793. Pastor is Dr. James Walters.

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## Missionary News

Tony and Karen Gray, missionaries to Brazil, are in the States (address: 322 S. 36th Ave., Hattiesburg, MS 39401). He considers Moss Point his hometown. The former Karen Burns was born in Waynesboro.

Warren and Ruth Harris, missionary associates to Peru, are on the field (address: Apartado 544, Chiclayo, Peru). He was born in McComb and considers Summit his hometown.

Jeffrey and Sheila Parker, missionaries to Zimbabwe, are on the field (address: P.O. Box W-197,

Waterfalls, Harare, Zimbabwe). He was born in N.Y., and also lived in Yazoo City. She is the former Sheila Tucker of Canton.

Timothy and Dorcas Patterson, missionaries to Honduras, have completed language study in Costa Rica and arrived on their field of service (Apartado 35588, Tegucigalpa, Honduras). He was born in Biloxi.

Bob and Sherry Sims, missionaries to Ghana, are in the States (address: 1806 Dauphin St., Mobile, AL 36606). She is the former Sherry McCraw of Jackson.

## Staff Changes

Broadmoor Church, Jackson, called Marcus Peagler as minister of education, effective Nov. 8. A native of Florence, he previously served at First Church, Quitman.

Peagler is a graduate of the University of Southern Mississippi and New Orleans Seminary. He is a special worker for the Sunday School Department, Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.

Memorial Church, Richton, has called Leonard D. Walters as pastor, effective Oct. 14. His previous place of service was Zion Rest Church, Buckatunna. Walters received his education at Clarke College and William Carey College.

Sammy J. McDonald III has



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# College student missions deadline is approaching

ATLANTA (BP) — College students seeking domestic summer mission work through the Home Mission Board should apply by March 10.

Student summer missionaries must

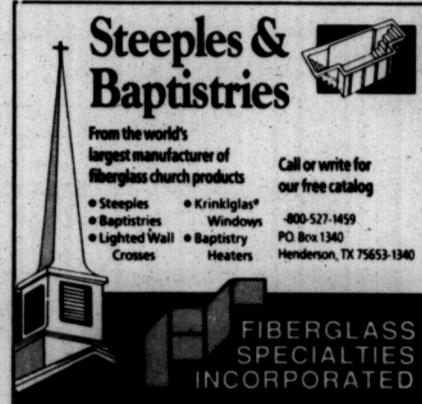
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be Baptist, must have completed their freshman year of college and must be willing to serve for 10 weeks during the summer. Students assigned by the board receive \$60 per week, round-trip transportation and limited insurance.

Those interested in student missions work should contact their state convention's student department or missions department or the Home Mission Board's volunteer division at 1-800-HMB-VOLS.



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## Mississippi Baptist Evangelism Conference

January 25-26, 1993

West Jackson Street Baptist Church  
Tupelo, Mississippi  
Hotels

Below is a partial list of the hotels available in the Tupelo area to conference participants. The list is for information only and not an endorsement of the MBCB.

**Days Inn\***  
1015 Gloster  
(601) 842-0088  
S : \$43.70  
D : \$48.07

**Ramada Inn**  
854 N. Gloster  
(601) 844-4111

**Passport Inn**  
401 N. Gloster  
(601) 842-1961

**Econo Lodge**  
1500 McCullough  
(601) 844-1904  
S : \$41.52  
D : \$45.89

**Town House Motel**  
927 S. Gloster  
(601) 842-5411

**Village Inn**  
1013 N. Gloster  
(601) 842-4903

**Economy Inn**  
708 N. Gloster  
(601) 842-1213  
S : \$27.26  
D : \$32.72

**Coliseum Motel**  
767 E. Main  
(601) 844-5610

**Coliseum Motel**  
767 E. Main  
(601) 844-5610

**Executive Inn\*\***  
1011 N. Gloster  
(601) 841-2222  
S & D : \$47.00

**Belden Inn**  
McCullough Blvd.  
(601) 842-0448

S : \$30.53	D : Single
D : \$38.19	D : Double
	K : King bed
	P : Persons

**Holiday Inn**  
923 N. Gloster  
(601) 842-8811  
S : \$43.61  
D : \$49.16

**Trace Inn**  
3400 W. Main  
(601) 842-5555  
1-4P, D/K : \$41.52

\* Continental B'fast  
\*\*Conference Hotel

Thursday, January 14, 1993

BAPTIST RECORD PAGE 9

## Names in the News



Tylertown Church, Tylertown, held a deacon ordination service on Jan 3 for Larry Martin and Don Ward. Pictured, from left, are Wayne Kimbrough, pastor, Ward, Martin, and Ansel Estess, chairman of deacons.

Tamara K. Wilkinson, Brandon, graduated from New Orleans Seminary on Dec. 18 with a Master of Divinity degree. She is currently serving as minister to single adults at the Aspen Hills Community Church in Eagan, Minn., a suburb of Minneapolis. Aspen Hills Community Church is a Southern Baptist church which began in October from work done by a praxis team from New Orleans Seminary this past summer. Wilkinson was a part of that team.

Tom Stevens has resigned as minister of education at Woodland Hills Church, Jackson, and is available for supply, interim, or full time work. Contact him at 1057 Avondale Street, Jackson, MS 39216 or call 981-0836.

Vickie Polnac is traveling to college campuses and Southern Baptist gatherings throughout the United States to publicize and recruit for the Foreign Mission Board's International Service Corps. International Service Corps, including

the journeyman option, is for people serving as mission workers from four months to two years. Recent college graduates through the age of 30 can pursue the journeyman option, which involves two years of service. Polnac, of Stanford, Texas, was a journeyman in Jurbise, Belgium, from 1988-1990.

Richard A. Crews, Escatawpa, received a bachelor of theology degree from Florida Baptist Theological College, Graceville, Fla. on Dec. 18.

## Innovative churches seen as SBC's future

HOUSTON (BP) — Innovative churches will play a leading role in the future of the Southern Baptist Convention, said speakers during a conference for leaders of such congregations.

At least 1,200 people, from as far away as Georgia, California, and Michigan, attended the three-day forum sponsored by the Home Mission Board and Vision 2000, a network of innovative church leaders.

With more than half of Southern Baptist churches plateaued or declining, conference leaders said innovation is essential. Rick Warren, pastor of Saddleback Valley Community Church in Mission Viejo, Calif., told participants, "You are the future of the Southern Baptist Convention." Others called the conference, the first of its kind, a "historic meeting" and a "watershed event." Saddleback Valley Church is among the fastest-growing in the SBC.

Churches labeled as innovative are not all alike, but typically their primary focus is attracting unchurched people. Some use drama in their services, sing more choruses than hymns, and ask those making commitments to use response cards rather than walk down the aisle.

Churches that break from tradition, however, should not discount the past, said Erwin McManus, director of Global Impact in California and one of the meeting's organizers.

"God is not a rigid God," he added. "He is creative. God said, 'Behold, I will do a new thing.' You were not called to live in the past but to launch from the past." Commitment to do whatever it

takes to reach a community for Christ is the only proper motivation for being innovative, said Warren. Innovative church leaders should abide by three rules, he said:

First, never compare ministries. Comparison causes discouragement when leaders find people doing a

better job, pride when leaders find others not doing as well.

Second, never criticize others' methods, and stay positive when being criticized.

Third, never give up. "Keep your eyes on the goal, and the goal is changed lives."

## Mississippi Baptist Evangelism Conference

January 25-26, 1993

West Jackson Street Baptist Church  
Tupelo, Mississippi

Monday, January 25

1:30 p.m.

Prayer  
Welcome  
Music  
Ed Young  
Music  
Danny Lanier  
Prayer  
Music  
Bailey Stone

9:00 a.m.

Prayer  
Music  
Bailey Stone  
Music  
Jack Smith  
Prayer  
Music  
P.J. Scott

6:30 p.m.

Prayer  
Music  
W.A. Jones Jr.  
Music  
Tim Lee  
Prayer  
Music  
Bo Baker

1:30 p.m.

Prayer  
Music  
Bill Duncan  
Music  
Paul Powell  
Prayer  
Music  
Bo Baker

For more information,  
contact the Evangelism  
Department, Mississippi  
Baptist Convention  
Board, at P.O. Box 530,  
Jackson, MS 39205-  
0530. Telephone (601)  
968-3800.

6:30 p.m.

Prayer  
Music  
W.A. Jones Jr.  
Music  
Tim Lee  
Prayer  
Music  
Paul Powell

## Just for the Record



**First Church, Philadelphia,** recently held its GA Recognition Service. Seventeen girls received special recognition for Missions Adventures. Pictured, from left, row 1, are Lacey Culpepper, Chrisy Jaggar, Angela Spence, Miriam Webb, Misti McKay, Rachel Webb, Brittany Jayroe, and Lindsey Cheatham; row 2, Ashly Boler, Briana Jayroe, Dana Daniels, Amanda Johnson, Jessica Eakes, Kristin Deweese, and Abby Loper; row 3, Amye Henry, Ashley Brown, Natalie Nowell, Carly Byars, and Lane Jackson; row 4, Andra Daniels, Sheley Jaggar, Allison Barnett, Rachel Thrash, and Jessica Thrash. Leaders are Brenda Nowell, Janet Moore, Laura Thrash, Roberta Byars, and Becky Webb.



**RAs of Wynndale Church, Terry,** donated \$500 to the University Medical Children's Hospital for the "Light a Light for Children" program. The RAs, first through sixth grade, worked hard to raise this money. Pictured are Michael Sandidge, Bradley Swindoll, Clayton Duncan, Zack Adams, Charles Weathersby, Christopher Moore, Nathan Sanders, James French, Colby Powell, PJ Waldrop, Donny Guynes, Justin Saffle, Mark Brewer, Trey Rein, David Quarles, and Ryan Saffle; counselors Kerry French, Larry Sanders, and Steve Smith; and Glenn Taylor, RA director.

**Kittiwake Church, Pass Christian,** will have its January Bible Study the week of Jan. 18-22. The times are 6-7:15 p.m. each night. The study will be led by Gregg McBride, pastor.

**Bethlehem Church, Yazoo Association,** reached its highest goal in the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for foreign missions. The amount received was \$1,035. John E. Schoolar is pastor.

**Castlewoods Church, Brandon,** recently broke ground on a 6,500 square foot interim worship center which will seat 300 people. Completion of phase one of the master plan is projected for June of 1993.

Larry McDonald is pastor.

**Melrose Church, Bentonia,** recently held a ground breaking ceremony for an addition to its fellowship hall. Members of the building committee are James Hood, Ernest Foster, Billy Robinson, Marion Foster, and Carolyn Vandevere. James H. Garner is pastor.

You are invited to invest a morning in your child's future at the **Woodland Hills Baptist Academy Open House**, 5055 Manhattan Road, Jackson. It will be held Jan. 20 and 21 from 9-11 a.m. each day.

**Four Mile Creek Church, Escatawpa,** will host Lee Pitts and



**The Roy McKay Chapter of RAs** at Madden Church, Leake Association, raised \$26 for the Baptist Children's Village in a three mile walk-a-thon. Pictured in a recognition service, left to right, are Nathan Busby, Billy McBeath, Luke Howell; back row, Andy Thaggard, Josh Moore, and Paul Busby. Byron Howell is pastor.

"God's Little Talking Tree" Nicky, in services at 7 p.m., Jan. 21-24. Call the church at 475-8244 for more information.

**The Homes of Grace** will celebrate its 28th anniversary on Jan. 17, 2 p.m., at the men's home chapel in Vancleave. Billy Williams, pastor of First Church, Gautier, will be the guest speaker.

**RECOVERY 4 U**, a weekend seminar with family counseling minister Ron Mumbower will be hosted by **First Church, Jackson**, Jan. 15-17. Registration begins at 6 p.m. Jan. 15. Small group discussions, individual counseling, and programs for school-age children will be included along with Dinner Theater on Saturday Night. Call the Singles Ministry at (601) 949-1906 to pre-register or for more information.

## CHILDREN

From page 2

Are we not forgetting God when we slay "his" children who have been entrusted to our care? Have we not forgotten God when we don't reach out to help and to support women and families who face problem pregnancies and the emotional and economic burdens of physically and mentally impaired children?

America is practicing child sacrifice. We are sacrificing our unborn babies through abortion and our young children through abuse and

neglect because we have forgotten God "and worshiped and served the creature more than the Creator..." (Rom. 1:25). We must remember that God is a God of holiness, righteousness, and judgment. He is also a God of mercy and forgiveness. "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9). If we will "humble" ourselves, "and pray, and seek His face, and turn from our wicked ways, then God will hear from heaven, and will forgive.. and will heal" our land (2 Chron. 7:14).

Land is executive director of the Christian Life Commission, SBC.

make up for any loss in revenue, leaders said.

Some of those funds might be needed to pay the salaries of WMU workers now employed by the more conservative state conventions. Some of those positions may be eliminated in retaliation for WMU's openness to the Fellowship, board members said.

During the board's discussion of the committee's proposals, reporters were not allowed to quote statements made by board members. Otherwise, leaders said, the members — who are state WMU presidents and executives — would be reluctant to speak frankly.

O'Brien said WMU members resent the pressure placed on them to take sides in the SBC-Fellowship dispute, a pressure she said still could fragment WMU. "The lines drawn in our denomination are not ours," she said.

"We would hope we could be the one umbrella that could accept all groups," she told Associated Baptist Press.

Board members were told the proposal from the ad hoc committee was not designed as an endorsement of the Fellowship — the group is not named in the documents — nor as a slap at the Home and Foreign Mission boards.

Leaders of both those SBC agencies were due to speak later in the week to the Executive Board, which was meeting at Shocco Baptist Assembly near Talladega, Ala. Both agencies receive about half their funding from mission offerings promoted by WMU. In exchange WMU receives about 6% of its funding from the HMB and FMB to promote the offerings.

O'Brien said she can't predict how SBC leaders will respond to WMU's new direction. How will WMU respond if the SBC forms a new women's organization? "We're going to keep doing what we've always been doing," O'Brien said.

SBC leaders "would be hard-pressed to justify" forming a new agency, "because we're not stopping anything we've done before," she said.

Even with the new direction, she said, WMU has not changed its assigned role as an auxiliary to the SBC.

"We are interpreting the (term) 'SBC' as Southern Baptist churches, not the agencies," O'Brien told reporters. "From that perspective, it is our responsibility to be auxiliary to Southern Baptist churches, and that's what we are going to do."

Warner is editor, Associated Baptist Press.

## Uniform Espousing sexual purity



By Chuck Pourciau  
Matthew 19; 1 Corinthians 6;  
Romans 12

"Abortion is wrong. It is sin. It is an abomination before God." We've all heard these statements before; while they are true, they must not be our only efforts to fight against abortion. We are most successful at stopping abortion when we stop unplanned pregnancies. Yet unequivocally, abortion is wrong even when the pregnancy is unplanned.

Abortion is a rapidly growing tragedy; more than 1.5 million are performed each year in the United States alone. It is no coincidence that the demand for abortion increased as the respect for the biblical view of sexuality decreased. The abortion debacle is a by-product of this *sexual revolution*. It is increasingly apparent that the sexual revolution is becoming sexual suicide.

The church must teach the biblical view of the man/woman relationship. No one else teaches it. Many young lives are destroyed because the church fears the subject of sexuality. Let's examine just a few of the principles in God's Word.

**God created us as sexual beings** (Matt. 19:4-6). After man was created, God saw it was not good for him to be alone, so he created a woman. Notice that he did not create another man, but a woman. Sexuality is a wonderful gift of God. The fact that man has misused it does not make the gift of sexuality evil.

When is sexuality very good? When it is practiced in a monogamous marriage relationship. God created male and female, and God instituted marriage. Sexuality is a good gift to be exercised within a God-ordained marriage. The marriage relationship is the only legitimate arena for the ultimate expression of one's sexuality. Premarital and extramarital sex are clearly in opposition to the will of God as expressed in his Word (Gal. 5:19; Col. 3:5; 1 Thes. 4:3; 1 Cor. 6:9). Sexuality expressed only in a monogamous heterosexual relationship is also the only sex that does not carry with it the threat of a disease.

**We are responsible to God to use our bodies as God intended** (1 Cor. 6:13b, 18-20). Rarely do we realize that this teaching concerning the body as the temple of the Holy Spirit is a command to flee fornication. That we are commanded to *flee* fornication is a graphic way to underscore its danger. Webster properly defines fornication as "sexual intercourse between unmarried persons." To use the body for fornication is to defile the temple of the Holy Spirit, and to use the body in direct opposition to the will of God.

There are some serious consequences to the practice of fornication. First, and foremost, the fornicator is out of fellowship with God due to the sin of sexual immorality. Second, guilt and depression often mark the life of a Christian who practices fornication. Third, fornication often results in unplanned pregnancy. Fourth, the fornicator runs the risk of contracting AIDS or venereal disease. The Christian's body is the dwelling place of the Holy Spirit. We must honor God with our bodies and not defile his dwelling place.

**The believer should choose to serve God with his total person, mind, and body** (Rom. 12:1-2). We are to present our bodies, including sexuality, as living sacrifices, holy and acceptable unto God. This is impossible if one is sexually impure through fornication, adultery, or homosexuality.

The total person must be transformed into what God desires. He refers to a transforming of the mind in Romans 12:2. Sexual purity must begin within the person. All sexual sin begins in the mind. The mind that thinks of sexual sin will one day lead the body to commit sexual sin. God must transform our minds into his image. It is then that sexual impurity will become a thing of the past.

People are under pressure to compromise the sexual standards of God. This view of human sexuality is seen by today's society as old fashioned and outdated. Yet God will empower you to overcome social pressure and glorify him with your body. Also, God's grace can cleanse past shortcomings and equip for future victory.

The fear of AIDS and venereal disease has ignited a new emphasis on teaching *safe sex*. There is only one form of safe sex: sex within a monogamous marriage relationship. We must begin by teaching it in our homes, so our children will recognize false teaching when they encounter it, which is certain.

Pourciau is pastor, First Church, Louisville.

## Bible Book Keep your heart diligent



By Guy A. Hughes  
Matthew 19, 1 Corinthians 6,  
Romans 12

Being the father of three precious God-given children, two of whom are girls, this pastor would not object to a motion at the next Convention to establish the first "Baptist Convent" to be located in my hometown. Seriously, like many other Christian parents, I share a tremendous feeling of responsibility and sometimes tremble at the thought of raising my children in this sex-crazed society. The "if it feels good, do it" mentality has diseased us with amorality, evident by symptoms such as AIDS, abortion, adultery, pornography, and other sicknesses. Our only hope is educating the minds of our children to obey God's principles.

**When God created people, he created them as sexual beings** (Matt. 19:4-6). God made us male and female for a purpose. To refuse to acknowledge our sexuality is to refuse God's design and purpose for our lives. Much to the chagrin of the unisex proponents and militant feminists, God created us as male and female. Sexuality is God's gift to us and we should not be embarrassed about the way he made us. Scriptures make it very clear that sexual purity is always God's purpose. One man for one woman, for a lifetime, is God's ideal. This ideal can only be obtained if we choose to be obedient to God's will for us by exercising faithfulness, modesty, unselfishness, self-control, and love. One's sexuality should be physically expressed only in the marriage relationship. God makes it very evident that premarital and extra-marital sex are violations of his plan for us.

**You are responsible to God to use your body as God intended** (1 Cor. 6:13b, 18-20). We are commanded to "flee fornication." Fornication is defined as the human sexual intercourse other than between a man and his wife. This includes premarital sex, adultery, homosexuality, and all other sexual sins. When it comes to sexual sin, we never have the right to choose — we must always say, "No!"

Paul said it best: "For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men. It teaches us to say 'No' to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled upright lives in this present age..." (Titus 2:11-12). Once we give our lives to the Lord Jesus, we cannot be "pro-choice." You are not your own. You were bought with a price; therefore honor God with your body (v. 20). Your only choice should be God's choice and you should conduct yourself accordingly.

**You should choose to serve God with your total person** (Rom. 12:1-2). You are like clay in the hand of the potter and two forces are at work in molding you. The world mocks God and has its own philosophy for you to live by. God is calling you to be not conformed to this world and to let him transform you by the renewing of your mind. You are to love God's standards, not by the standards of others. God will help you to live by his standards if you refuse to compromise by giving in to negative peer pressure and negative social influences.

The older my children grow, the more pressure they will feel to give in to the sin of our society. We can only do our part to teach them. We must trust God to remind them.

I wash the dirt from little feet  
And, as I wash, I pray...  
For soap and water cannot reach  
Where, Lord, Thee alone can see:  
Her hands and feet — these I can wash;  
I trust her heart to Thee.

— R. Ryberd

Hughes is pastor, Friendship Church, Grenada.

## BAPTIST MEN'S DAY

JANUARY 24, 1993

"MISSIONS INVOLVEMENT  
THROUGH EQUIPPING BELIEVERS"

## Life and Work

## Preserve sexual purity



By Laura Russell  
Matthew 19, 1 Corinthians 6,  
Romans 12

Anything goes.... These two words could easily describe the world we live in today, especially concerning sexual purity and marriage. Our lesson this week points out that regardless of the way the world views marriage relationships, sexual purity, marriage fidelity, premarital and extramarital sex, God's guidelines are still and always will be the same. His ideal is for one man and one woman to be joined for life and that the sexual experience is a gift meant exclusively for marriage. God's plan will never change — no matter how immoral the world becomes. God's plan will stand the test of time.

**God created people as sexual beings** (Matt. 19:4-6). Jesus cites the purpose of God in creation (Gen. 1:27, 2:24). God's purpose called for man and wife to be one flesh. Marriage is a sacred union of one man with one woman who dedicate themselves to the loving service of God and each other. Monogamy is God's ideal: one man and one woman for a lifetime. Any disruption of this violates God's plan.

God intended sex to be a gift meant only for the marriage relationship. When sex is rightly used, some of the most meaningful human relationships arise. However, when sex is not used the way God intended, we find some of the profoundest disappointments known to man.

**You are responsible to God to use your body as God intended** (1 Cor. 6:13b, 18-20). Verse 13 says that our bodies were made for the Lord. Paul uses the term body here in a broader sense than just the physical tabernacle. It is almost equivalent to man's personality, the whole being. The body is to be an instrument of righteousness to holiness, therefore, it is never to be made an instrument of sin.

In verses 18-20 we are told to "flee fornication." Fornication is defined as "any unlawful sexual intercourse." The command to flee is a positive command. While some sin might be conquered by flight, the sin of immorality is conquered only by flight. Our bodies have been redeemed from hopeless condemnation by the supreme sacrifice of Christ. We are to be clean vessels fitted for his use. We should consider ourselves wholly the Lord's and make it our business to glorify God with our bodies, and with our spirits, which are his.

**You should choose to serve God with your total person** (Rom. 12:1-2). Verse 1 reminds us that Jewish believers in the Old Testament presented sacrifices to the Lord. But Christian believers, instead of giving something outside themselves, are to offer their own bodies to God as living, holy, and acceptable sacrifices. We are to offer ourselves: all we are, all we have, and all we do. In return we receive such rich blessings from God.

Verse 2 tells us not to copy the behavior and customs of this world, but to be different people with fresh newness in all we do and think. We are to live by God's standards, not by the standards of others. God will give us the strength and courage we need to live in a world that has rejected his way. Every aspect of one's living needs to be in accordance with the "good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God".

Whatever situation you might be in now, or whatever your past deeds have been, there is no need to despair. There is always hope in the Lord. You can personally accept God's forgiveness for past sins and failures, and you can begin to live today in sexual purity because of God's forgiveness. In turn, we can offer and mediate that forgiveness to others.

May the lifestyle you choose to live today be consistent with God's plan and purpose for marriage and the family.

Russell is a member of First Church, Brandon.

# capsules

**DALLAS CHURCH TO CUT COSTS BY ENDING TV BROADCASTS:** DALLAS (ABP) — First Church of Dallas will end its long tradition of broadcasting its worship services, apparently because of financial constraints. The church's deacons voted Dec. 22 to stop the local broadcasts in January, according to church administrator Tim Hedquist. The decision will save the church an estimated \$600,000 to \$700,000 in 1993. Left unclear by the decision was the future of the church's media minister, Ron Harris, who may have lost his job as a result. Hedquist would not comment on Harris' situation. The church has broadcast its Sunday morning worship services for more than 25 years, most recently on Dallas-Fort Worth TV station KTVT. Station officials said Dec. 23 they had not been informed of the church's decision to stop broadcasting. The decision comes on the heels of the resignation of pastor Joel Gregory, who abruptly left the pulpit in September in a dispute with Senior Pastor W. A. Criswell over leadership of the 28,000-member congregation, Southern Baptists' largest. Some church members unhappy with Gregory or the events surrounding his resignation have called for the firing of staff members hired by Gregory. Those include Harris and Hedquist. The church, with a debt of \$8.6 million, reportedly has come under increasing financial strain since Gregory's departure. The day after the deacons' meeting, Harris declined to discuss his employment situation with reporters. He would not say whether or not he still had a job.

**UNIVERSITY HOUSING OFFICIALS REQUIRE STUDENTS TO ACCEPT HOMOSEXUAL ROOMMATES:** Across the nation colleges and universities are putting formal policies into effect to force students and professors to accept the homosexual and lesbian lifestyle as legitimate. Students who express moral objections to homosexuality are often subject to disciplinary sanctions. A few examples of such policies follow: Pennsylvania State University now has a formal policy that forbids freshmen from refusing to live with a homosexual roommate. The school states that the new policy is meant to "shape attitudes about students who are different by virtue of race, ethnicity, or sexual orientation." Three of the colleges that make up the University of California and Santa Cruz have started forcing all freshmen to go through "homophobia and biphobia" workshops. Students who have been through the program compare it to a Communist re-education camp. A Stanford University housing official wants students not only to "tolerate" homosexual behavior, but to "accept" it as perfectly normal. Accordingly, he's letting homosexual couples settle down in campus housing previously reserved for families.

— CCC-Campus Alert

**SOUTHERN BAPTIST WORKER ESCAPES WHEN ASSAILANT'S GUN MISFIRES:** MANDERA, Kenya (BP) — An attempted shooting of a Southern Baptist aid worker in a Somalia refugee camp in Kenya failed Jan. 4 when an automatic rifle misfired. Loyd Banes, an International Service Corps volunteer with the Foreign Mission Board, was the target of a man who yanked a rifle from a burlap bag as Banes drove past just a few feet away. The gunman threw down the weapon and the bag when guards from CARE, an aid organization, chased him. A hand grenade was inside the bag. Banes, from Woodstock, Ga., drove immediately into town and brought Kenya police back but they could not locate the attacker. The incident came just two days after Somalis murdered a UNICEF doctor in Kismayu, Somalia. (Several Southern Baptists had worked closely with the victim, Sean Devereaux, last fall in a southern Somalia town.) Banes and his wife, Doris, are on a six-month assignment working at a 50,000-population refugee camp outside Mandera, Kenya, just across the border from Somalia.

## The spirit of money

By Gary & Sherry Moore

(ZPS) — The rhetoric of the campaign season is behind us. America now begins to think about its future with more calm and reason. The worry of the moment is our federal debt.

The debt is a serious problem. But so was the inflation of the early '80s. Experts told us it was more than another problem of life. It was to end life as we knew it. It did not, and our national debt will not, either. Here are three reasons why:

First, everyone knows our debt rose from \$1 to \$4 trillion during the past decade. Few seem aware the interest rates on Treasury securities dropped by the same percentage. Remember 16% Treasury bills? That was the cost of our debt in the early '80s. It is much lower now. And our incomes have risen

during the past decade. In short, the COST of the debt as a percentage of our income is about the same as it was ten years ago.

Second, everyone knows America now pays \$300 billion in interest each year. Where does that money go? Most seem to think that money simply disappears. It does not. Most is paid to Americans individuals, banks, mutual funds, and insurance companies who invest in Treasury securities — it is put back into our economy.

Third, America did borrow a lot of money from other nations during the '80s. But in the recent words of the Economist magazine, "The United States is in the unique position of being able to settle its foreign debts in its own currency. When the Japanese spent trillions of yen buying billions of dollars'

## Southern Baptists struggle to gain ground in Utah, Mormon stronghold

By Sarah Zimmerman

**SALT LAKE CITY (BP)** — Contender for the 2002 winter Olympics. First on Fortune magazine's 1990 list of best cities for business. Centerpiece in an outdoor playground of ski resorts and national parks.

For all it offers, Salt Lake City is foreign to most Southern Baptists who think of it only as the worldwide headquarters for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints or Mormons.

Corporations are attracted to the Utah labor pool, which the New York Times described as "young, well-educated, non-union, and reared with the hard work ethos of the pervasive Mormon faith."

Calling Mormonism pervasive is an understatement. Seventy-one percent of Utah's residents are Mormons, and less than 1% are Southern Baptists, according to a 1990 survey of church membership.

"Mormonism is more than a religion. It's a culture, a way of life," said Lavoid Robertson, home missionary and recently retired director of evangelism for the Utah-Idaho Southern Baptist Convention.

In Utah, being Mormon is a prerequisite for social and political success. "Either play their game or you're out," Robertson said.

Yet Robertson said God has given him a love for Mormons. "They are good people," he said. "They are deceived, but they don't know it."

When Robertson moved from Texas to Idaho 31 years ago, a neighbor called immediately to say he was a Mormon elder with a

wonderful message to share. Robertson replied that he was a Baptist preacher who also had a wonderful message to share. The neighbor hung up and never befriended Robertson.

Mormons have changed their tactics in a search for acceptance by mainstream religions, Robertson said. Now the church would



**SALT LAKE CITY** — The Mormon temple is the center of life, and even the street numbering system, in Salt Lake City. Southern Baptists make up less than 1% of Utah's population, compared with 71% who are Mormons. (BP Photo by Sarah Zimmerman)

expect Robertson's neighbor to offer his friendship rather than alienate him, he said.

Exclusion felt by non-Mormons may be most difficult for teenagers who have a strong desire to belong to a group, said Eric Frye, pastor of First Southern Baptist Church of Salt Lake City for 15 years.

Frye's younger son, now in his 20s, lives in another state. He was popular in high school and was active in athletic programs, but he tells his parents now that if they did not live in Salt Lake City, he would never come back to the place where he felt so left out.

Mormonism teaches that men are potential gods, and that women can be married to gods. "Youths who believe they are going to be gods or married to a god can be condescending," Frye said. "If you aren't part of that, you are by nature considered inferior."

In some cases, Mormon children are not allowed to attend Baptist-sponsored activities, said home missionary Steve Scudder, director of Salt Lake City's Baptist Concern Center and pastor of Glendale Church.

One of the concern center's roles is to distribute food and infant supplies to needy families. The Mormon church has an extensive social service network, but Scudder said the material is used as bribes. Needy Mormons who have not attended church faithfully are told that they will receive assistance if they resume their church attendance.

Some people leave the Mormon church because of the bishops' power to control who receives assistance and who is worthy to be admitted to the temple, Scudder said. Those who leave Mormonism typically reject all religions rather than seeking another faith, he said.

On the other hand, Sandra Tanner, co-director of Utah Lighthouse Ministry, said she left Mormonism because she thought, "There's got to be more of God than I'm finding in Mormonism, and I was weary of trying to be good enough for eternal life."

Leaving Mormonism is difficult, Tanner said, because it is an ethnic identity. "I spent my first year as a Christian crying," because of the ties she was breaking with her family and culture.

For Scudder, being a non-Mormon in Utah is actually an opportunity to witness. He is often asked "Where are you from?" and "Why are you here?"

Tony Harrell, bivocational pastor of Roosevelt Church in Salt Lake City, has adopted a motto from Mormonism: "Every member a missionary." He trains his church members

to share the plan of salvation and give a testimony of what God has done in their lives. His church baptized 30 people in 1991.

Zimmerman writes for HMB.

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